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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab Committee on Lockerbie Meets in Tunis *[Tunis Radio]* 1
Syrian Foreign Minister Arrives *[Damascus Radio]* 1
Egypt's Musa Comments *[MENA]* 1
'Abd-al-Majid Comments *[Tunis TV]* 2
Libya Pledges To Hand Over Suspects *[AFP]* 2
'Abd-al-Majid Comments After Session *[Tunis Radio]* 2
Lebanon-Syria Summit: Talks Participation Not Set *[London AL-HAYAH 16 Mar]* 3

Palestinian Affairs

'Abd-al-Shafi Assassination Attempt Reported 4
'Miraculously' Saved *[Jerusalem TV]* 4
'Abd-al-Shafi Blames IDF *[Jerusalem Radio]* 4
'Abd-al-Shafi Denies Attempt *[Jerusalem Radio]* 4
Red Eagle Denies Attempt *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 5
Delegate Comments on Attacks *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 5
Al-Husayni 'May' Replace 'Abd-al-Shafi *[Beirut Radio]* 5
PLO Seeks International Protection for Palestinians *[Algiers VOP]* 6
Qaddumi: No Palestinian Peace Process Withdrawal *[AFP]* 6
'Arafat 'Solution' to Deportees Issue Detailed *[AL-DIYAR 13 Mar]* 6
'Abd-al-Shafi Still Insists on Deportees' Return *[London AL-HAYAH 16 Mar]* 8
PLO's 'Abbas on Aspects of Peace Process *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 15 Mar]* 9
'Al-Surani, 'Abd-al-Shafi on Gaza Withdrawal *[MENA]* 10
Hamas, PFLP Officials on Possible Gaza Pullout *[AL-RA'Y 19 Mar]* 10
Hamas Urges Escalation of Intifadah *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 11
Completing Discussions With Christopher Called For *[Jerusalem TV]* 11
Sha'th: U.S. Policy on Israel Encourages Violence *[MENA]* 12
Results of Rabin's U.S. Visit Called 'Worrisome' *[AL-FAJR 18 Mar]* 12
Rabin U.S. Trip 'Utter Failure' for Peace Process *[AL-QUDS 18 Mar]* 12
Problems Facing Israeli Prime Minister Viewed *[Algiers VOP]* 13
Factions Say U.S. Creating Islamic Scare *[Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio]* 14
'Arafat, British Envoy Discuss Peace Process *[Algiers VOP]* 14

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Official Dies of Wounds Received in 'Islamists' Gun Attack *[Paris International]* 15
Leadership Holds Dialogue With UGTA, Other Associations *[APS]* 15
Socialist Forces Front Boycotts Dialogue With HCE *[Algiers Radio]* 15
Trade Official Confers With Visiting Iraqi Trade Minister *[INA]* 15

Egypt

Al-Baz on Dispute With Sudan, Other Issues *[MENA]* 16
Professors Return From Khartoum, Situation 'Worse' *[MENA]* 16
Education Minister Denounces University Takeover *[MENA]* 17
Government, Security Officials To Be Relieved *[AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY]* 17

Cairo Said To Seek 'Abd-al-Rahman's Extradition *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 17 Mar]* ..17 17
People's Assembly Approves Policy Statement *[MENA]* 17
Defense Minister Discusses Domestic Situation *[Cairo TV]* 18
U.S. Seen Determined To Maintain Assistance *[MENA]* 18
Interior Ministry Confirms Arrest of Westerners *[AL-AHRAR 15 Mar]* 18
Paper: 'No Alternative' To Combating Terrorism *[MENA]* 19
Nine al-Jihad Group Members Killed in Asyut *[AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY]* 19
Policeman Killed in Clashes Buried *[AFP]* 19
Asyut Security Campaign Detailed *[MENA]* 20
Members of 'New Terrorist Organization' Arrested *[MENA]* 21
Al-Azhar Imam Discusses Amending Laws *[AL-AKHBAR 14 Mar]* 21

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Summons FRY Envoy, Condemns Milosevic *[JANA]* 21

Sudan

Garang's SPLA Announces Unilateral Cease-Fire *[AFP]* 22
Foreign Minister Denies Iranian Ships Present *[Omdurman Radio]* 22

Tunisia

Cooperation Agreement Signed With Mauritania *[Tunis Radio]* 22

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Saudi Arabia

Muslim Fundamentalist Leader Freed After Week in Saudi Jail *[AFP]* 23

United Arab Emirates

Regime To Cooperate With India in Bombings Investigation *[AFP]* 23

IRAQ

Kurdistan Parliament Approves Government's Resignation *[Voice of the People of Kurdistan]* 24
'Analysis' Says Iran Raids Had Coalition Forces 'Blessing' *[INA]* 24
U.S. Planes Reportedly Dropped Flares Near al-Nasiriyah *[INA]* 24
Airspace 'Violations' Protested to Arab League *[INA]* 24
Iraqi Permanent UN Envoy Meets Nonaligned Ambassadors *[INA]* 25

ISRAEL

Rabin Ends U.S. Visit, Comments on Talks With Butrus-Ghali *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
Senior Sources Voice Disappointment *[HA'ARETZ 19 Mar]* 26
Early Return Considered *[HA'ARETZ 19 Mar]* 27
Rabin Seeks Mutual Compromise *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Tourism Discussed With Jordan, Syria *[DAVAR 17 Mar]* 28
Russia's Bovin on Strategic Cooperation *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Cultural Agreement With Russia Initialed *['AL HAMISHMAR 17 Mar]* 28
Tajik Deputy Prime Minister Arrives on Visit *[HA'ARETZ 12 Mar]* 28
Envoy Says Austrian Premier To Visit in 3 Months *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
UNESCO Director Comments on Current Relations *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
Three Killed, Over 130 Injured in 16-18 Mar Gaza Riots *[Jerusalem TV]* 29
Chief of Staff: Palestinians Must Accept Army Activity *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Arab Wounded Near Hebron; Body Found in Tulkarm *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Official Supports Ban on Arab Workers; Others React *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Rubinstein on Unemployment Benefits for Gazans *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Majority Backs Unilateral Gaza Pullout, Call To Bear Arms *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 19 Mar]* 30

Ben-Eli'ezer, Palestinian Figures Address Media Seminar *[AL HAMISHMAR 16 Mar]* 31
Katyushas Fired at Security Zone; SLA, IDF Return Fire *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31
Defense Official Comments on Arrow, Procurements *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31
Minister Der'i Urges Coalition Expansion; Sarid Opposes *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31
Likud To Submit No Confidence Over Security, Unemployment *[Jerusalem TV]* 32
Poll Shows Dissatisfaction with Government, Ministers *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 12 Mar]* 32

JORDAN

Hizballah Said To Have Planned Attacks on Americans *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
Rabin U.S. Visit Said To Increase Israeli Intransigence *[AL-DUSTUR 19 Mar]* 33
'Text' of Press, Publication Draft Law *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 15 Mar]* 33
Correction to Peres Criticized, Peace Emphasized 39

LEBANON

Buwayz Discusses Peace Talks, Domestic Issues *[London MBC TV]* 40
U.S. Efforts on Talks Sought *[VOL]* 43
Al-Hariri Says U.S. Policy Based on 'Manipulation' *[VOM]* 43
Al-Hariri Outlines State Priorities *[Beirut Radio]* 43
Discusses Development Plan *[VOL]* 44
Al-Hariri Meets With Irish Defense Minister *[Beirut Radio]* 45
Nasrallah Urges Christians To Join Islamic Resistance *[AL-DIYAR 10 Mar]* 45
Urges All-Out Resistance *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 45
Hizballah Deputy Terms Regime Oppressive, Dictatorial *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 46
Lahd Says Syria, Iran Continue To Encourage Hizballah *[Jerusalem Radio]* 46
Two Explosions Destroy Pro-'Arafat Officials' Cars *[VOL]* 47
Defense Minister Denies Army To Expand Deployment *[VOL]* 47
Israeli Artillery Shells Road in South *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 47

SYRIA

Commentary Discusses al-Asad Speech, Praises Unity *[Damascus Radio]* 48

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Hekmatyar Urges Parties To Waive Rivalry Over Ministries *[London International]* 49
• Leaders Prepare for New Political Situation *[London AL-HAYAH 8 Mar]* 49
• Factions Threaten To Resume Fighting *[London AL-HAYAH 5 Mar]* 50
Najibullah Said Afflicted by Kidney Ailment *[AFP]* 51
• Jamaat Leader Comments on Mediation *[London AL-HAYAH 4 Mar]* 51
Rabbani's Representatives Leave for Jalalabad Meeting *[Kabul Radio]* 52
Islamabad Seen as Sincere in Implementing Afghan Accord *[Islamabad TV]* 52

India

Government Prepares Plan To Prevent Subversion *[Delhi Radio]* 52
Two Arrested in Bombay *[Delhi TV]* 53
Live Bombs Found in Calcutta *[Delhi Radio]* 53
Bomb Blast in Bombay, No Casualties *[AFP]* 53
Blast Affects Supply of Bauxite in Bihar *[Delhi Radio]* 54
Dinesh Singh Discusses Trade With ASEAN Official *[Singapore BUSINESS TIMES 17 Mar]* 54
Committee To Be Set Up *[Delhi Radio]* 55
Importance of Defense Exports to ASEAN Stressed *[INDIAN EXPRESS 8 Mar]* 55
Accords With Moldova To Strengthen Bilateral Ties *[Delhi Radio]* 56
Chavan Says No Elections in Former BJP-Ruled States *[Delhi Radio]* 56
Janata Dal-A Rules Out Merger With Congress-I *[Delhi Radio]* 56
Communist Party Amends Constitution, Structure *[Delhi Radio]* 56
Rao Said Donning 'Mantle of Supreme Leader' *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 5 Mar]* 56

Defense Scientist on Success in Radar, Other Technologies *[PATRIOT 2 Mar]* 57
Article Reviews Progress in Defense Production *[PATRIOT 4 Mar]* 58
Tank Production Said 'Hurried' *[INDIAN EXPRESS 2 Mar]* 58
Samajwadi Janata Party Criticizes Economic Policies *[Delhi Radio]* 59
Optimism Expressed on Export Growth Rate *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 4 Mar]* 60
Rupee Convertibility To Raise Cost of Oil Imports *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 6 Mar]* 60
Minister Reiterates Stand on Dunkel Proposals *[Delhi Radio]* 61
Proposals Called 'Iniquitous' *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 6 Mar]* 61

Iran

Qods Day Rallies Mark Palestinian Solidarity *[IRNA]* 62
Naqdi Assassination Attributed to Regime *[Voice of Iranian Kordestan]* 63
DPK Sends Letter to Mitterrand About Bombing *[Voice of Iranian Kordestan]* 63
Nakhichevan's Aliyev Thanks Iran for Assistance *[IRNA]* 64
Minister Sees U.S.-Iranian 'War of Ideologies' *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 13 Mar]* 64
Egypt's 'Propaganda' Said Bid for U.S. Sympathy *[JAHAN-E ESLAM 13 Mar]* 65
European Parliamentarian Criticizes Resolution *[Tehran TV]* 66
Petroleum Minister on Phone-In Program *[Tehran Radio]* 66
World Bank Grants $157 Million for Agriculture *[Tehran Radio]* 68
European Firms Contracted To Build Qeshm Bridge *[IRNA]* 68
Abadan Port Reopens After Reconstruction *[Tehran Radio]* 68
Petrochemical Complex To Become Operational in 1993 *[IRNA]* 69

Pakistan

Official Condemns Indian Charges Over Bomb Blasts *[Islamabad Radio]* 69
Reduction in Tension Urged *[Islamabad Radio]* 69
Rao Thanks Sharif for Message *[Islamabad Radio]* 70
Spokesman Denies Talks With U.S. on Nuclear Program *[Islamabad Radio]* 70
DPRK Decision on NPT Withdrawal 'Understandable' *[THE MUSLIM 16 Mar]* 70
Japanese Trade, Industry Official Visits *[Islamabad TV]* 70
Meets Sharif *[Islamabad TV]* 71
Cooperation in Economic Reform Program *[Islamabad Radio]* 71
Joint Naval Exercises Held With France *[AFP]* 71
Netherlands To Provide $50-Million Grant *[Islamabad TV]* 71
Accord With Turkey on Building Highway Project *[Islamabad TV]* 71
Sharif Orders Arrest of Punjab Assembly Member *[Islamabad TV]* 71

Sri Lanka

Exchange Control Regulation for Exporters Withdrawn *[Colombo International]* 72
Resident Guest Scheme for Foreigners To Be Implemented *[Colombo International]* 72

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab Committee on Lockerbie Meets in Tunis

LD1803140793 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The Arab seven-member committee in charge of following up the crisis between Libya and some Western countries will hold a meeting this evening in Tunis in the presence of the foreign ministers of the member countries: Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Libya, Egypt, Syria, and the secretary general of the Arab League. The meeting comes in the context of efforts made by this committee since it was set up by the Arab League Ministerial Council at its meeting on 23 March 1992 in Cairo to find a solution to this crisis.

The Arab League Council has charged this committee with making the necessary and urgent contacts with the UN Security Council, the Security Council member states, and the UN secretary general in order to find a solution to the crisis, in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter and the principles of international law.

The seven-member committee has held several meetings since it was set up at the level of foreign ministers and permanent delegates to the Arab League. The committee has also held several contacts with the various sides interested in the crisis. On its part, the Arab League Council has discussed this subject on many occasions.

The committee members have begun arriving in Tunis to take part in its meetings. After the arrival of the foreign ministers of Mauritania, Egypt, the Arab Libyan Jamahiriyah, and the secretary general of the Arab league, the arrival is expected this afternoon in Tunis of the foreign ministers of Algeria, Morocco, and Syria.

Syrian Foreign Minister Arrives

JN1803180293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Tunis—[Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and his accompanying delegation arrived in the Tunisian capital this afternoon to participate in the meetings of the Arab League's seven-member committee entrusted with following up on Libya's crisis with some Western states. The minister was received at Carthage International Airport by Habib Ben Yahya, Tunisian foreign minister; Said Ben Mustapha, Tunisian secretary of state for foreign affairs [title as heard]; the Syrian Embassay staff in Tunis; and senior Tunisian Foreign Ministry officials.

Faruq al-Shar' made a statement to reporters following his arrival. He expressed hope that a solution to the Libyan-Western problem over the Lockerbie affair will be found. Al-Shar' stressed the need to adopt a unified Arab stand at the committee meetings so it can be presented to the Arab League Council's next session. He also stressed the need to hold contacts with the concerned states in order to help find an appropriate solution to this problem.

The foreign minister voiced his pleasure at holding these meetings in Tunis, affirming that this visit will be an opportunity to exchange views and hold consultations with Habib Ben Yahya and senior Tunisian officials on issues of mutual interest. The Arab seven-member committee entrusted with discussing and resolving the Libyan-Western crisis is scheduled to begin its meetings in Tunis later today.

Egypt's Musa Comments

NC1803135693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1305 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Tunis, 18 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the situation today regarding the Lockerbie crisis is different than it was a year or a few months ago. But, he said, no agreement has yet been reached on a specific and final solution to this crisis.

In a statement he made to the MENA correspondent in Tunis after arriving there today, Musa said that there still is a possibility that the situation could escalate. We still are looking for ways to implement the UN Security Council resolution and are trying to avoid an escalation and to reach a solution consistent with Arab interests and international legitimacy through the meetings of the seven-member committee.

He added that Egypt has not submitted any working papers or memorandums to the seven-member committee, but Libya has submitted a memorandum to the committee. He affirmed that Libya wants to solve the crisis.

Musa said he will have an opportunity to meet with Palestinian officials in Tunis, particularly Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, to discuss some of the issues pertaining to the peace process. He added that there is a chance of solving the Palestinian deportees issue before 20 April, the scheduled date for the ninth round of peace negotiations.

Foreign Minister Musa said contacts are taking place between Egypt and Syria to set a date for a meeting between President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in the coming days. He added that this meeting is particularly important because it will take place before Mubarak's visit to Washington in April, and because Mubarak will take with him to Washington, in these particular circumstances, the Arabs' views and will talk about important Arab issues.

Musa said Egypt is trying to solve the Palestinian deportees' issue. He expressed hope that there will be time to achieve progress on the basis of current proposals.

He welcomed a visit by president 'Arafat to Cairo, saying he has an open invitation.

Musa said that he will meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on the sidelines of the meetings of the seven-member committee. The foreign minister noted that he is carrying an oral message from Mubarak to the Tunisian president.

'Abd-al-Majid Comments

LD1803200493 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The Arab committee of seven charged with following the crisis between Libya and some Western countries will hold a meeting in Tunis this evening at the level of the foreign ministers of the member-countries: Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Libya, Syria and Egypt, and the Arab League secretary general. [passage omitted]

On his arrival in Tunis, Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid made the following statement:

[Begin recording] ['Abd-al-Majid] In fact we have come here at the invitation of the Tunisian foreign minister to hold a meeting. We hope that at this meeting we will be able to contribute to reaching a peaceful solution to the problem that will take into account Libya's sovereignty and the flexibility it has demonstrated in dealing with the problem and stop any escalation in the situation in this sensitive region.

[Correspondent] Are there any new Libyan proposals?

['Abd-al-Majid] Indeed, there is a Libyan memorandum which has been submitted and it will be discussed by the committee this evening, God willing. [end recording]

Libya Pledges To Hand Over Suspects

NC1903063193 Paris AFP in English 0330 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Tunis, March 19 (AFP) - Libya late Thursday [18 March] again pledged to hand over two of its nationals accused in the Lockerbie bombing to a neutral country for either investigation or trial, Arab diplomatic sources reported.

Libyan Foreign Minister 'Umar al-Muntasir reiterated his government's position before a meeting here of a seven-member Arab League ministerial committee, which has been charged with resolving Libya's standoff with the West over the December 1988 destruction of a Pan Am 747 airliner.

The United States and Britain have accused and sought the extradition of two Libyans in the mid-air bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

Since April 1992 Libya has been under an arms and air traffic embargo imposed by the United Nations Security Council on the grounds that it has not sufficiently cooperated with international investigations into the bombing.

Al-Muntasir said the two Libyans could be handed over to authorities in a neutral country by the UN Secretary General.

He also told the Arab committee that Tripoli was prepared to cooperate with France in an investigation into a 1989 explosion aboard a French civilian airliner over Niger that left 170 people dead. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Majid Comments After Session

LD1903090293 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] The proceedings of the Arab Committee in charge of following-up the crisis between the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah and a number of Western countries began last night with a session which lasted until 0100, more than three and one-half hours. Following the Committee's proceeding our colleague Hadami Aissaoui asked Arab League Secretary General Dr. Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid about the outcome of the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Aissaoui] Your Excellency the Arab League Secretary General, did you achieve anything during last night's meeting in Tunis, when you continued the examination of the crisis between the Arab Libyan Jamahiriyah and a number of Western powers?

['Abd-al-Majid] We are still examining the issue; it is an important one. Their excellencies the foreign ministers, the members of the committee, appreciate their responsibilities and are eager to end the crisis. God willing, we will continue our meeting tomorrow morning [19 March] after our meeting with his excellency the president of the republic.

[Aissaoui] The meeting of the seven-man committee was the center of the talks held last night between [Tunisian] Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya and Dr. Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, who stated afterward that the meeting was interesting and fruitful, pointing out the common desire to reach a stance which would lead to a suitable solution. Habib Ben Yahya also had talks last night with 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison, and with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Upon arrival in Tunis yesterday afternoon, Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali expressed his hope that the meeting of the Arab seven-man committee would find agreement between concerned parties which would put an end to the crisis and its negative repercussions on the Libyan Jamahiriyah and the Maghreban region in general, and reaffirmed Morocco's solidarity with the Libyan people.

Redha Malek, member of the Algerian Higher State Council and minister of foreign affairs, asserted upon arrival in Tunis yesterday afternoon that the meeting in Tunis is a good opportunity to bolster cooperation among Maghreban states within the consecrated framework of the Arab Maghreb Union, and to coordinate Arab efforts in general, in order to find the necessary

solution to the Lockerbie problem, which has been a very complicated one, hoping that such a solution will be satisfactory and acceptable. [end recording]

Lebanon-Syria Summit: Talks Participation Not Set

PM1803123693 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Mar 93 p 3

[Muhammad Shuqayr report: "Regional Concern Dominated Lebanese-Syrian Summit Talks"]

[Excerpts] Beirut—Those who followed the Lebanese-Syrian summit talks between Presidents Ilyas al-Hirawi and Hafiz al-Asad, which were attended by senior Syrian officials, came out with an early impression that the two countries' participation in the ninth round of peace negotiations scheduled to be held in Washington on 20 April has not been settled. This is because Beirut and Damascus are awaiting the final outcome of the contacts which Egypt is making with the United States with a view to speeding up the Palestinian deportees' return to their homes.

In the light of the results of the active Egyptian move toward Washington the two countries will reassess their position on participation in the peace negotiations in coordination with the other Arab parties, proceeding from their desire "to safeguard the Arab consensus and intercept any oneupmanship intended to cast doubt on the Syrian-Lebanese position."

Pending clear results, the confirmation of Lebanon's and Syria's participation in the ninth round of negotiations depends on the extent of Washington's success in putting pressure on Israel to secure a comprehensive and urgent solution to the deportees issue. [passage omitted]

As for what was discussed at the Lebanese-Syrian summit, well-informed sources say that the regional and international concern dominated the talks between al-Hirawi and al-Asad, which were attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Minister al-Shar'. Lebanese sources say that the reason is that the summit was held weeks before the question of the resumption of the negotiations has to be confronted.

There was also a need to review positions on the Arab and international scenes in the light of the PLO's refusal to go to Washington until an urgent solution to the deportees issue is found and in the light of Amman's insistence on following the Palestinian position and not going to the negotiations while there is any dispute on the Palestinian scene. [passage omitted]

AL-HAYAH has learned that Presidents al-Hirawi and al-Asad believe that the Arab region is going through a delicate and critical situation. They are concerned about what is happening in Egypt and the reemergence of tension in Egyptian-Iranian and Egyptian-Sudanese relations, in addition to the extremism dominating the region, which they believe will not be overcome unless Washington hastens the negotiations to achieve the aims required.

The sources said that Presidents al-Hirawi and al-Asad dealt with the nature of the U.S. position on the negotiations in the light of the assurances which the Arab states obtained from former President George Bush and to which his successor, President Bill Clinton, is committed.

According to the Lebanese sources, President al-Asad pointed out that the "ideas presented by Washington regarding the negotiations are no longer sufficient, although they are positive. In its capacity as cosponsor of the negotiations the United States must hasten to develop its position by translating political signals into practical steps."

President al-Asad said that "the political signals launched by Israel from time to time are not sufficient. There is also a need for Washington to clarify its position on the peace talks."

President al-Asad asked here "what Washington means by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statement that his country would play the role of a full partner in the negotiations, and how it can translate this into practical positions that could constitute a qualitative move at the level of the peace talks."

He asked whether there was "a contradiction between Christopher's assertion that his country will play the role of a full partner and his statement: We will not take the place of the states participating in the negotiations, nor will we play their role."

It is thus clear that Damascus and Beirut are requesting a U.S. clarification of what is intended by playing the role of a full partner, and whether it means that Washington intends to exert pressure to achieve a just and balanced settlement in the region, or whether it means that it is leaving the matter to the negotiating parties on the pretext that it will not play their role, and that it will leave them to deal with any rigidity that may occur in the negotiations.

In Damascus' view, the resumption of the negotiations requires not only a quick solution to the deportees issue, "but also U.S. pressure in order to move from broad ideas and outlines to what can help to reactivate the peace conference, so that the next rounds will not end up where the previous round did, especially as in view of the growing fundamentalist tendencies the region can no longer tolerate procrastination or postponement. The negotiations now need a new thrust that helps to absorb extremist or fundamentalist tendencies."

Palestinian Affairs

'Abd-al-Shafi Assassination Attempt Reported

'Miraculously' Saved

TA1903193993 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1931 GMT 18 March 93

[Text] Early this evening, terrorists failed in their attempt to assassinate Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation for the peace talks.

Our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay cites Palestinian sources in Rafah who reported that while Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi was speaking with residents of the al-Shabura refugee camp in Rafah, a car with members of the Red Eagle squad, affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, suddenly appeared. The squad members shot at 'Abd-al-Shafi but, miraculously, did not hit him and he was saved. The shooting killed 45-year-old Yusuf al-Raviv [name as received].

'Abd-al-Shafi Blames IDF

TA1903211593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Yusuf al-Gharbi [name as received], a 45-year-old resident of Rafah and a teacher at an UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency] school, was shot and killed this evening when Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, was touring the city.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman reported that soldiers heard three shots and when they arrived at the scene they saw that the man who stood not far from 'Abd-al-Shafi had been killed. An inspection carried out by the commander of the IDF troops in Rafah found that the man was killed by shots fired by Arab residents.

Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, however, said that the man was killed by shots of an IDF patrol that was pelted with rocks. Speaking to our correspondent Gil Litman, a Palestinian source affiliated with 'Abd-al-Shafi denied this was an attempt to assassinate the head of the Palestinian delegation.

'Abd-al-Shafi Denies Attempt

JN1903123293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1107 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Carried within the "With the Midday Events" program]

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, has denied the news reports which said that he was the target of an assassination attempt yesterday during his stay in the Shabburah neighborhood of Rafah.

Our correspondent Hasan Abu-Zayid will tell us about this issue and about the latest security developments in Gaza Strip.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Zayid] Yusuf Ibrahim Gharib [name as received], 50 years old, was killed in Rafah yesterday evening after shots had been fired at him. Palestinian sources said that Yusuf Gharib was killed when shots were fired at him while he was near Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. These sources, which are close to Palestinian chief negotiator Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, said that Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi arrived in the Shabburah neighborhood to extend his condolences to the family of Mahmud Abu-Madhkur, who died early in the week. Scores of neighborhood residents, including some wanted people, were there. The sources added that troops belonging to the Israel Defense Forces [IDF] surrounded the area. Then, the sources noted, several youths hurled stones at the troops, which opened fire to disperse them—a development which caused the death of Yusuf Ibrahim Gharib, who was near Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. The sources maintain that the IDF troops had surrounded the area and wanted to apprehend wanted people in the midst of 2,000 people who were near the house of Abu-Madhkur.

Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi denied the reports which said that he escaped an assassination attempt, saying that he heard shots when he attempted to get into his car after offering condolences to the family of Abu-Madhkur. Let us listen to Dr. Haydar 'Abdal-Shafi's version of the story:

['Abd-al-Shafi] As a matter of fact, I left for the house of the deceased in Rafah to offer my condolences. A large crowd of people was there. You are well aware that we are in the month of Ramadan. Usually, the relatives of the deceased invite those who come to extend their condolences to have iftar [feast of the breaking of the Ramadan fast] with them. So, we stayed there until the evening prayer call, when we had our iftar. While having our iftar, it was said that the army was in the area; that is, around the area, and that the groups coming from outside Rafah must know this, because the army might stop cars, conduct some inspections, and some enquiries. For my part, I did not pay any attention to this, because I judged the situation to be quiet and peaceful. Having finished our iftar, we wanted to leave. We went out. Large crowds of people were there. My estimate is that there were almost 1,000 people attending the iftar banquet. We went out and headed for the place where the car was parked. We were about to get in the car. Suddenly, I heard gunshots. I thought that the gunshots were fired in the air. But, I suddenly saw somebody near me fall to the ground. This is all that happened.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi: Is it possible that you were the target of the gunshots?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I do not think so, not at all. As a matter of fact, I have resented the reports circulated to this effect and found them repulsive. Why? Because if anybody were to target me, he would have more than 1,000 opportunities to do that. That is, since I took part in the negotiations, I have been going about from my house to the Red Crescent walking and unescorted. If I were the one targeted, the culprits would have had much better

opportunities than when I was standing among thousands of people. Hence, it is likely that the reports aired to this effect were totally baseless. Indeed, as I have just said, I have deemed the promotion of this news report repulsive. I am extremely indignant about this report.

A spokesman for the Southern Region Command said that the personnel manning an IDF checkpoint in the Shabburah neighborhood of Rafah heard four gunshots. Afterward, he noted, they summoned additional troops to identify the culprits. They then found the body of the deceased Yusuf Gharib, who works as a teacher with the UN Relief and Works Agency, at the site of the incident. The IDF spokesman reiterated that the IDF has conducted an investigation into the incident and reached the categoricel conclusion that the IDF troops did not fire in the direction of where Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi was standing. Moreover, there were no army activities at all in the area, the spokesman noted.

The spokesman for the Southern Region Command added that it seems that the culprits who opened fire in the Shabburah neighborhood yesterday were Arab residents, noting that that the IDF troops have nothing to do with the incident. [end recording]

Red Eagle Denies Attempt

TA1903075693 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Sources in the Gaza Strip close to George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which operates the military gangs that call themselves the Red Eagle, last night categorically denied that their men had attempted to assassinate Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks. [passage omitted]

Delegate Comments on Attacks

TA1903075393 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nazmi al-Ju'bah, member of the Palestinian advisory committee to the peace talks, by Uri Paz and Gilat Levi—live]

[Text] [Levi] Have the members of the Palestinian delegation faced constant death threats in the last few days?

[Al-Ju'bah] I do not think so at all. We heard talk in the past about our lives being threatened, but nothing has happened to us so far. We have not yet encountered any real danger. We have talked to all the Palestinian elements, and none of them had any interest whatsoever in killing us.

[Paz] This is a new situation. There has been an assassination attempt.

[Al-Ju'bah] It is still not clear who was behind it. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and the other delegates standing beside him claim it was the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] that opened fire in Rafah yesterday.

[Paz] The IDF has denied these allegations, of course.

[Al-Ju'bah] That is correct.

[Levi] Do you not think that extremist elements among the Palestinians might be prompted to take such action in view of the fact that the peace talks have not been making much progress recently?

[Al-Ju'bah] I think there has been very heavy pressure on all the sides in the last few days. The situation is deteriorating by the day. I cannot say that this is related to the peace talks. I would probably link it more to the fact that 415 people are still out of the country, and half of them are inhabitants of Gaza, Rafah, and Khan Yunus. In other words, local elements stand behind this pressure on all the sides.

[Paz] Do you feel that support for the delegation, of which you are a member, has been decreasing among the Palestinians?

[Al-Ju'bah] I think we lost a great deal of support in the last few months. Our people had hoped we would attain real peace rapidly; you remember what happened after the Madrid conference. We lost ground every day we and the Israelis wasted in the negotiations. We still think we have a majority among the Palestinian people. We have not lost as much support as some quarters would hope or claim. We think the majority of the Palestinian people is in favor of peace and supports what the delegation is doing. Our recent positions regarding the deportations strengthened our stature among our people. I think that now, of all times, there is no chance of any personal attack on the delegation. There may be attempts to attack it politically, but not personally.

[Levi] What security arrangements do you have to protect the lives of the Palestinian delegation?

[Al-Ju'bah] We are in no danger. We refuse to have the IDF or other Israeli security personnel watch over us. We hope Israel will agree to the deployment of international troops to watch over the lives of all Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

[Paz] Dr. al-Ju'bah, thank you very much.

Al-Husayni 'May' Replace 'Abd-al-Shafi

NC1903063793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Informed U.S. sources have stated that Washington next week will begin preliminary talks and consultations to resume the Arab-Israeli talks on 20 April. U.S. officials will hold talks on 22 March with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory committee of the Palestinian delegation, and delegation spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi.

Reports say that al-Husayni may be appointed head of the Palestinian delegation in place of Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. The reports indicate that Washington desires this.

PLO Seeks International Protection for Palestinians

LD1803205893 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] A PLO official spokesman has reiterated the need for providing urgent international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories given the unprecedented escalation of crimes and repressive measures being carried out by the Israeli occupation. The official spokesman added that the hysteria of racism and the incitement to kill Palestinians have become a state policy of the Israeli Government be it through the practices of the army of occupation or by allowing the gangs of fascist settlers to carry out acts of terrorism against citizens, pointing out that the statements of the Israeli officials in the recent days have constituted a public incitement and open invitation to carry out acts of terrorism and kill the Palestinian people. He pointed out that what the world is witnessing today—i.e. the daily massacres, the growing number of sons of the Palestinian people who are being martyred or injured day in and day out by the bullets of the Israeli soldiers and settlers, and the organized terrorist campaigns which have been carried out by settlers with the connivance and the help of the army of occupation—this is the outcome of such a policy, which has also been linked with a continuous policy of economic siege and the Israeli war of famine against the Palestinian people in occupied territories. The official spokesman reiterated that the international community is therefore required to immediately take action, without any further delay, to secure effective international protection for our people inside the occupied homeland in accordance with international treaties and charters and Security Council resolutions and the United Nations.

The official spokesman warned furthermore against the serious repercussions that might be brought about by the continued Israeli abuse of human rights, on the situation as a whole in the region, a matter that would mean entrenching the obstacles that have thus far hindered the resumption of the peace process. He added that the UN Security Council should therefore take a firm stance on these crimes by Israel against the Palestinian people in accordance with its previous resolutions on the matter. The United States is also required to clarify its stance on these crimes against our Palestinian people, he affirmed.

Qaddumi: No Palestinian Peace Process Withdrawal

NC1803200593 Paris AFP in English 1901 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Tunis, March 18 (AFP)—The Palestinians will not withdraw from the Middle East peace process even if they boycott the bilateral talks with Israel next month in Washington, a senior PLO official said Thursday [18 March].

"We'll suspend more than once, if needed, our participation in the negotiations, but we will not withdraw from the process," Faruq Qaddumi, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization's political department, told AFP.

"Those who call for a pull-out are in fact asking us to back out from the course of history ... [ellipsis as received] The time for military choices and classic wars is over," he said of radical Palestinian factions opposed to the peace process.

"We say no to resumption of negotiations while the Palestinian deportees live in nothingness, where Israel shows contempt for international legality and the bases of a political settlement," Qaddumi insisted.

He was referring to some 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel to south Lebanon in December.

Qaddumi, back from a tour of Arab countries, said Egypt and Syria would work for U.S. pressure on Israel over the deportees and report back to a meeting of Arab parties to the peace talks on March 28 and 29 in Damascus.

He said the main Palestinian demand was for Israel to renounce its policy of expulsions from the occupied territories ahead of the April 20 resumption of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

"The issue is not whether to discuss phased repatriation of the deportees but a promise (by Israel) to no longer resort to the practice of expulsions," he said.

Under a U.S.-proposed compromise, Israel has offered to take back an initial group of about 100 deportees, with the rest to return from south Lebanon by the end of the year.

'Arafat 'Solution' to Deportees Issue Detailed

NC1803163593 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 13 Mar 93 p 14

[Report by Thurayya 'Asi: "In Cairo, 'Arafat proposed a solution to the deportees issue: Move them to the Ansar-1 detention camp in al-Khiyam. 'Abd-Rabbuh proposed a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue in the presence of the United States and Egypt"]

[Excerpts] The Arabs, especially the Palestinians, are in a dilemma now that the invitations have been sent to the parties involved in the Middle East peace process. The dilemma has been expected since the Palestinians were deported and Israel showed reluctance to comply with UN Resolution 799.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has seen the Arabs' embarrassing position resulting from the impasse on the issue. Yet, without any change in the situation, he has sent out the invitations with his Russian counterpart; Russia is the negotiations' second sponsor.

This raises two possibilities:

1. Christopher wants more of the policy of squeezing the Arabs, pushing them into emotional positions that reject participation in the next round of negotiations. This will provide Israel with new opportunities, which it is ready to exploit to depict the Arabs as being opposed to the peace process and to use this as a basis for insisting on not returning the deportees, having portrayed them as symbols of fundamentalist terrorism the dangers of which are spreading to the "civilized" West.

If this is the objective, Christopher would be showing his bias toward Israel from the start. Observers believe this will dash hopes of positive results arising from any participation in the peace negotiations.

2. The second possibility is that the U.S. secretary of state has, in his talks on his recent trip to the region, reached an understanding on resuming the negotiations whether the deportees issue is settled or, alternatively, separated from the negotiating process. [passage omitted]

Informed sources say the Arabs will not hesitate to agree to go to Washington to participate in the next round of bilateral talks, because their absence will only strengthen the Israeli stance we mentioned above. But such an Arab stance, if it is taken, will be subjected to much bargaining and emotional popular reaction, especially in the Palestinian arena, should the Palestinians continue to refuse to take part in the next round.

Here we must discuss the Palestinian position following the initial reaction rejecting the U.S.-Russian invitation. Some observers ask: Is this a principled stance or a prelude to a more flexible one? Does it aim simply to pressure the United States to elicit a firm or flexible Israeli stance on the deportees?

Observers point to a third possibility, basing their view on Faysal al-Husayni's remarks that a simple declaration by Israel of not resorting to deportations or setting a specific date for the deportees' return might remove the obstacles to the resumption of the talks.

In addition, and according to exclusive information obtained by AL-DIYAR, Yasir 'Arafat, alias Abu-'Ammar, proposed to the Egyptians a solution or a compromise on the deportees issue so that the problem does not remain pending and subject to bargaining. Briefly, 'Arafat's proposal calls for Israel to agree to move the deportees to the Ansar detention camp between Marj 'Uyun and al-Khiyam in south Lebanon. He will then be ready to consider the issue closed. According to reliable AL-DIYAR sources, Abu-'Ammar justifies his proposal by saying he has 40,000 detainees in Israel's prisons and detention camps and that having another 400 new detainees will be no tragedy. Further, al-Khiyam is Lebanese territory, but under Israeli control. This will be a satisfactory outcome for the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Such flexible Palestinian proposals inspire optimism that the problem of Palestinian participation in the next round of talks following the U.S.-Russian invitation will be solved. The U.S. secretary of state is optimistic that the Palestinians will attend, couching his optimism in a remark that the Palestinians have a historic opportunity, which they must seize in case it is not repeated. Worthy of note was Secretary Christopher's comment on Hanan 'Ashrawi's refusal to accept the invitation, when he said "he had not yet heard Faysal al-Husayni's response." Christopher also said he appreciates al-Husayni's positive attitude. According to observers, Christopher's comment means the Americans are actually gambling on divergent Palestinian positions. It might also mean that Christopher believes he will reach an agreement on the deportees with [Israeli Prime Minister] Yitzhaq Rabin, who is currently visiting the United States, an agreement that will remove the obstacle preventing Palestinian participation in the talks.

Observers also believe the Palestinian delegation is not embarrassed merely by the deportation crisis, but also by the volatile conditions and violation of Palestinian human rights in the Gaza Strip, where dozens are killed or wounded in daily bloody clashes. It is not easy in the circumstances for the Palestinians to attend the talks while they are faced with the deportee problem abroad and the intifadah in the occupied territories. The observers note, however, that settling the deportee problem is enough to allow the Palestinians to attend the negotiations, because Gaza's intifadah does not constitute an obstacle and, indeed, might become a winning card that the Palestinian delegation can play as proof of human rights violations and of the Palestinians' desire to exercise self-determination.

The Palestinians might intentionally adopt a position opposing the general Arab stance. According to reliable AL-DIYAR sources, PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, accompanying Abu-'Ammar on a recent visit to Cairo, asked the Egyptians to search for new formulas for a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue that would be attended by U.S. and Egyptian representatives. 'Abd-Rabbuh said then that the Madrid conference formula is not sacred scripture and that the Palestinian issue is distinct from the Syrian, Jordanian, or Lebanese. According to 'Abd-Rabbuh, no progress can be made without U.S. and Egyptian intervention, with the Americans and Egyptians acting as helpers, observers, or guarantors of any agreement that seeks to create circumstances conducive to an open dialogue.

Apart from the speculation, some observers believe the Palestinian stance is merely a storm in a teacup that will soon pass. The observers recall that before the eighth round of talks and during a meeting of the cordon states in Bayt Miri [in Lebanon], the Palestinians adopted a stance different from the other Arabs, but later changed their minds and attended the eighth round of talks, albeit with a reduced delegation as a form of protest. At the same time the observers pondered the possibility that the Palestinians might boycott the next round of talks if the other Arabs decide to attend. The observers believe that

if this happens, it will harm the entire course of negotiations, regardless of the role the United States might play, since it is illogical for the Palestinians to be absent from negotiations to which they are a basic party. The other Arab delegations will be unable to substitute for them. Israel would not accept such a substitution, because its objective remains to cause further Arab disunity and weaken the Arab negotiators' position. In this way, Israel hopes to achieve a separate agreement with each party. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Shafi Still Insists on Deportees' Return

PM1803164593 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Mar 93 p 6

[Report on telephone interview with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, by 'Ali Nun in London "yesterday"]

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli bilateral negotiations, has ruled that that the Israeli talk about a withdrawal from the occupied Gaza Strip could be serious. He told AL-HAYAH: "We are not negotiating Gaza only, but the occupied territory as a whole." Nevertheless, he pointed out that, if Israel withdraws, "we will need foreign help from the United Nations, Egypt, or Jordan—temporary help pending the establishment of the necessary institutions under the supervision of the PLO, our legitimate leadership."

In a telephone interview with him yesterday Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi reemphasized the Palestinian position of refusing to participate in the next round of bilateral negotiations scheduled to be held on 20 April in Washington before the Palestinian deportees return and Israel pledges to stop the deportation policy. He said: "This is our position, even if other Arab parties participate."

Asked about the increasing Israeli talk about the possibility of a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said: "I believe that what is being said about the subject is not serious. What (Israeli Environment Minister Yosi) Sarid said is a personal position, not the government's position. We asked the Israeli delegation during the direct bilateral negotiations about this subject, and the reply was that there is nothing serious about this. Besides, we Palestinians are not negotiating over the Gaza Strip only, but over the occupied territory as a whole. And the Strip does not have a character of its own for it to be separated from the main issue. At any rate, what is important is for Israel to give us enough time before its withdrawal in order to take the necessary precautions."

Answering another question, he pointed out that "we still believe that the question is unofficial and not serious. The Israelis are worried and frightened after what happened and is still happening (at the security level) and their government is faced with two concerns: Either to sever links with the occupied territory, and this is not in its interests, or to tolerate the situation as it stands, and this is uncomfortable. This is, of course, in the knowledge that the Gaza Strip is not important for Israel. What it is interested in is the West Bank."

Asked whether he would worry about the internal situation in the event of an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and what he would in such a case, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said: "In such a case there would be a pressing need for foreign help, and we could ask the United Nations to help us or request a neighboring Arab state—Egypt or Jordan—to provide a temporary assisting presence until we establish the required official organs. Of course, we are talking here about the direct responsibility of our legitimate leadership—the PLO."

On the present linkage between the resumption of the bilateral negotiations with Israel and the deportees' return to their homes, the head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation said: "Our position is still the same. We want Israel to adhere to the implementation of Resolution 799. What is more important is for it not to resort to the deportation policy again, and this is a very important point as far as we are concerned."

And what about the six points on which discussions focused during the meeting held in occupied Jerusalem with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and to which Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is said to have agreed? 'Abd al-Shafi replied: "We have not sensed any response from the Israeli Government regarding the deportees issue and the deportation policy in general. It wants to reserve its right to deport people—which we do not accept and cannot be accepted. Resolution 799 is clear, and deportation contravenes international law. And there are two very important questions (among the six points): First, Palestinian human rights and the need for Israel to adhere to the 1949 Geneva agreement concerning protecting civilians who are under occupation. Second, Resolution 242, which includes all the occupied Arab territories, including east Jerusalem." He added: "We have not heard from the Americans specific answers to these points, nor do we know what they have done with the Israelis."

And what would your position be if the other negotiating Arab parties go to the negotiations before the deportees' return and without the Palestinians? He replied: "We hope that that will not happen. We believe that it is difficult for the Arab states to go to the negotiations without resolving the deportees issue or without our participation. At any rate, for our part, we will work to convince the Arab brothers of our position and the importance of our adopting a unified position. We insist that time has come for Israel to comply with the Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy. If the Arab brothers are not convinced of our position and we are not convinced of theirs, it will not have an effect. Our position is a principled position and we will not got to the negotiations. However, that does not mean that relations have become bad. We understand their view and are interested in good and strong relations with all the Arab parties."

PLO's 'Abbas on Aspects of Peace Process

PM1803154793 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 15 Mar 93 p 4

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, by Wafa' 'Amr in Amman; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Amr] Has the PLO accepted 28 March, the date set by Syria for the five-sided meeting?

['Abbas] We would have liked that meeting to be held earlier so we could discuss with the Arab brothers the question of the resumption of the ninth round of negotiations and reach some agreement regarding the deportees issue, but it seems that the circumstances of the other parties made that the only possible date. At any rate, we will attend on that date.

['Amr] Is the Egyptian-Syrian six-point plan the same as the the six Palestinian demands? Is there any difference?

['Abbas] There is no change in the essence of the six points originally agreed upon with U.S. Secretary Warren Christopher in Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

['Amr] Have there been any recent contacts between the Palestinians and the Americans on these points?

['Abbas] Yes, we have held some contacts with them and asked that a Palestinian delegation go to Washington, but they did not respond. Yesterday Faysal al-Husayni and Edward Djerejian discussed the possibility of a delegation going to Washington to resume the debate on these points so that they may be implemented before the date set for the negotiations which, we understand, will be next month. So far, they have not answered our request.

['Amr] In the wake of your visit to Russia, how do you view the Russian role at this point?

['Abbas] After Minister Kozyrev's meeting with Secretary Christopher, the Russians invited us to Moscow. I met with Minister Kozyrev and it was agreed that the Palestinians would not object to the resumption of the negotiations and would even be enthusiastic about that provided all aspects of the deportation issue are resolved. The Russians agreed with us on that and have sent messages to all the parties concerned, including Israel, urging settlement of the deportation issue and reaffirming the positive Palestinian position. One of these messages went to brother Yasir 'Arafat.

['Amr] Has president Yasir 'Arafat been invited to visit Moscow?

['Abbas] I believe that neither the time nor the Russian circumstances are appropriate for such a visit. We know that President Yeltsin is passing through very crucial and difficult circumstances which, I believe, prevent such an invitation, but official contacts between Yeltsin and Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat], especially by correspondence, are continuing and so are contacts with Minister Kozyrev.

['Amr] Do you expect the other Arab parties to go to the negotiations without the Palestinians?

['Abbas] We hope they would not and believe that they should not because the main and central issue is the Palestinian issue. If the Arabs went without the Palestinians, it would in a way mean abandoning the Palestinian cause, particularly as they know perfectly well that we do want to go but the circumstances created by Rabin prevent that. [passage omitted]

['Amr] Do you expect any American steps in the direction of accepting a direct PLO role in the negotiations?

['Abbas] Europe has no objection to that. The problem is the United States not Europe because the latter is not officially a party to the negotiations and is not a sponsor. The sponsors are the Americans and the Russians. The Russians also have no objection. As far as I know, the Russians recognize us, and we have an embassy in Moscow. So, that problem depends on the Americans, who still believe that this is not the appropriate time. Of course, that pretext is unjustified because all the causes of the suspension of the dialogue have been eliminated. They do not talk about new preconditions. They just say that the time is not ripe.

['Amr] How do you interpret the new position taken by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which accepts the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip?

['Abbas] It is a lame position. Accepting the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip means accepting Security Council Resolution 242, which says that all states of the region have a right to live in peace within secure borders. Accordingly, if you want your state recognized, you should recognize the other state [Israel]. That position is tantamount to political petulance. Nonetheless, we see it as a kind of retreat from the original position and as a return to reason after the realization that Hamas' old views were illogical, unreasonable, and unacceptable given the new international balances. [passage omitted]

['Amr] Your visit to and speech in Saudi Arabia have caused some considerable controversy in Palestinian circles. Could you explain to us what you said in Saudi Arabia, and was your speech considered an apology to Saudi Arabia?

['Abbas] What I said in Saudi Arabia has been published by all papers and is known. What I said then I can say today and tomorrow and every day. I am not ashamed of what I said and I do not regret it. What I said stemmed from full conviction and is fully supported by the Palestinian legitimate authority. [passage omitted]

['Amr] How do you view Palestinian-Saudi official relations at present?

['Abbas] There have undoubtedly been some initial moves. We have made a start, but it needs great care before we can restore the normal situation of the past. [passage omitted]

['Amr] There has been much talk recently about great progress and almost agreement in the Syrian-Israeli track. Do you believe that Syria might conclude a separate peace agreement with Israel?

['Abbas] First of all, we must admit that the Arab [negotiation] tracks with Israel are different in nature, dimension, depth, and complexity. That is why we should expect progress on one front and delay on another. That is bound to happen, but what we understood from Arab coordination is that no [separate] peace agreement would be concluded first. Peace treaties can only be concluded on the basis of comprehensive peace. That is what we hear from our Arab brothers and that, we hope, is the fundamental commitment. [passage omitted]

'Al-Surani, 'Abd-al-Shafi on Gaza Withdrawal

NC1903105293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0945 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Jamal al-Surani has said that he expects Israel to withdraw quickly from the Gaza Strip and that he welcomes this. He said, however, that if Israel withdraws without special arrangements with the PLO, Egypt, the United Nations, or all these parties combined, it will be committing suicide. This is because the situation in the Gaza Strip is very complicated and tense. Therefore, any Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip should be within the framework of a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem.

In an interview published in Cairo's AL-'ALAM [The World] newspaper today, al-Surani said it is clear that Israel can no longer stay in the Gaza Strip, which constitutes a military, economic, security, and moral burden. Furthermore, the resistance is escalating in this overcrowded narrow strip.

Al-Surani explained that the settlers themselves do not want to stay in Gaza, which represents a historical problem for them because Gaza has never been a part of the Torah state.

Meanwhile, Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has said it is unlikely that Israel will withdraw from the Gaza Strip without putting forth prior conditions, stressing that the Palestinian side rejects such conditions.

In a statement to the same newspaper, 'Abd-al-Shafi described the living conditions in the Gaza Strip as tragic. In this connection, he noted that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency has announced vacancies for seven jobs and has received 1,466 applications.

'Abd-al-Shafi said if Israel decides to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, it must inform the Palestinian side in advance so it can safeguard law and order.

Hamas, PFLP Officials on Possible Gaza Pullout

JN1903104993 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 19 Mar 93 pp 24, 23

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement, said that there is a "scenario" for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip, noting that Palestinian, Arab, and international parties are discussing this scenario in Tunis, Cairo, Rabat, and Washington in coordination with the Israeli Government.

For his part, 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the PLO Executive Committee and representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] in the committee, said: "We are not aware of the existence of such a scenario. However, we do not rule out the discussion of a possible Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip on the Arab and international scenes with some Palestinian parties."

Both Ghawshah and Malluh affirmed to AL-RA'Y that "the Israeli officials' repeated statements on withdrawal from Gaza Strip cannot be deemed insignificant."

In reply to a question posed by AL-RA'Y, responsible Palestinian sources said that there is talk currently in under way among Israeli and international quarters about partitioning the political settlement in the occupied Palestinian territories, indicating that the settlement process will start with Gaza Strip. As regards the issue of the West Bank, it will be settled later, these sources contended.

The sources added: "Attempts are being currently made to bring some Palestinian leaders in Gaza Strip to Tunis for consultations with the Palestinian leadership on arrangements for the forthcoming administration in Gaza Strip. Indeed, a delegation from the Gaza Chamber of Commerce has arrived in Tunis for this purpose."

Ghawshah noted that "10 days ago, the Hamas Movement proposed the holding of an intra-Palestinian meeting, made up of all the Palestinian factions operating on the scene to discuss the future situation in the Gaza Strip in case Israel withdraws unilaterally from the Strip."

Ghawshah added: "Ten days have passed since we made this call. However, there have been no indications of a positive PLO response to it, even though some Palestinian factions have made similar calls out of concern for safeguarding Palestinian unity."

The Hamas spokesman maintained that a dialogue has been held on the issue with the brothers within the PFLP and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine

[DFLP], noting that a dialogue will soon be held with the 10 factions [opposed to the Arab-Israeli talks].

Ghawshah warned against the failure to reach a consensus on a future formula for administering the Gaza Strip in a democratic atmosphere, affirming that the liberation of the Gaza Strip will be a stupendous Palestinian accomplishment along the road to liberating the West Bank and the motherland—Palestine—which was occupied in 1948.

In a related development, Malluh said that "the PFLP has started a dialogue with all Palestinian factions, headed by the brothers within Fatah, Hamas, and the DFLP, to crystallize a unified Palestinian stand in both the occupied territories and the diaspora, a stand that could enshrine the national terms of reference. The involvement of all parties and factions, as well as all political and social figures in the Gaza Strip is envisaged in this endeavor, Malluh noted. This stand is meant to serve as a mechanism for addressing the problems and concerns plaguing the Gaza Strip, and also for tackling all eventualities regarding the strip, including a possible Israeli withdrawal from the strip."

Malluh added that "the issue of a possible Israeli withdrawal from Gaza figured highly in the talks recently held in Damascus between a PFLP delegation led by Dr. George Habash and a Fatah delegation headed by Abu-al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], not to mention the deportees' issue, and the forthcoming Middle East peace talks."

Malluh went on to say: "The PFLP delegation has underscored the PFLP's position toward the political process in light of the experience of the past 15 months of negotiations, the continued complete pro-Israel U.S. tilt, and the failure to resolve the deportee issue in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799.

Hamas Urges Escalation of Intifadah

NC1903074893 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] In a statement, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has called for stepping up the intifadah in the occupied territories following U.S. President Bill Clinton's statements during his meeting with enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Washington. The statement says that the fact that Clinton and terrorist Rabin ignored the Palestinian deportees during their talks shows insolent disdain for the Arab, and particularly the Palestinian position.

The Hamas statement calls for all-out resistance on every inch of the blessed Palestinian land, and for igniting the revolution everywhere and burning the occupying strangers. It stresses that this—not negotiations sponsored by the unfair American master—is the way to attain rights and regain sanctities. The statement says that it is only through jihad and mounting resistance that the Zionists can be forced to yield, make concessions, and withdraw from the occupied territories. The statement adds that the policy of negotiations and prearranged settlement only perpetuates and legitimizes the occupation.

Completing Discussions With Christopher Called For

TA1803184493 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Interview with Ghassan al-Khatib, member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, by Yoni Ben-Menahem; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ben-Menahem] Mr. Ghassan al-Khatib, what is the feeling of the Palestinian delegation's members on the results of the meeting between Rabin and President Clinton?

[Al-Khatib] First of all, until now we have not been informed of the results of this meeting. All we know is what we have beard from the news media. In fact, what we have heard is disappointing from two aspects. First, it seems that several issues which constitute obstacles to the resumption of negotiations were ignored. Ignoring those issues does not remove them. Most important of all is the deportee issue, which must be resolved before a return to the negotiations. Moreover, there are difficulties which we faced in terms of the nature of the Israeli negotiating positions, which are incompatible with the terms of reference of negotiations, above all Security Council Resolution 242.

On the other hand, reports about this meeting indicate a trend toward the enhancement of U.S. relations with and support for Israel. This shows a growing U.S. bias toward Israel at the expense of U.S. relations with and positions toward the Arab parties and the Palestinians. This does not contribute to the evolution of a neutral and, consequently, constructive role by the United States in the future.

[Ben-Menahem] There have been reports that some members of the Palestinian delegation will go to Washington before the upcoming round of negotiations.

[Al-Khatib] There is no agreement between or a decision by the Palestinian and U.S. sides on a visit at a fixed date. But there is a feeling on the Palestinian side, and I believe on the U.S. side, on the need for such a meeting. Contacts are under way over this matter. The need stems from the necessity of finishing the serious discussion that began between the Palestinian side and the U.S. secretary of state during his recent visit. This discussion has not been finished. It must be completed so that we do not reach the fixed date of the upcoming round without removing the obstacles to the Palestinians' participation which, consequently, will lead to the absence of the Palestinians from the upcoming round. This is not in the interests of the political process as a whole.

Sha'th: U.S. Policy on Israel Encourages Violence

NC1903110593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, has affirmed that violence in the occupied territories will continue as long as Israel continues to apply its iron fist policy and the United States provides Israel with unlimited support, irrespective of any progress in the peace process.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Sha'th said Israel, under Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, insists on stepping up inhuman practices against the Palestinians by firing on children, storming and blowing up homes, and arresting Palestinian youths.

He said it is natural for the resistance and the Palestinian intifadah to escalate in confronting these measures.

He added that Israel's insistence on not making any progress in the peace process and its refusal to resolve the Palestinian deportees problem only aggravates the situation in the occupied territories.

Sha'th said that the continuation of the Palestinian intifadah and resistance, especially in the Gaza Strip, has prompted some Israeli leaders to consider a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza because it is incapable of controlling the area.

He pointed out that discussions are under way with the U.S. Administration to fix a date for a meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Dr. Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory committee of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, the official spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, to discuss the future of the peace process and the obstacles facing it.

Regarding the visit by Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat to Cairo, expected before 'Id al-Fitr, Sha'th said it will be part of expanded Palestinian efforts to achieve fair conditions for the Palestinians to return to the peace process and the work to coordinate Arab positions, especially with Egypt.

Results of Rabin's U.S. Visit Called 'Worrisome'

TA1803153893 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 18 Mar 93 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "A Visit—and Worrisome Results"]

[Text] The decision by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to cut short his visit to the United States and return to Israel early has overshadowed the results of the visit itself. Those results are extremely "worrisome" to the Arab parties, including our Palestinian party, with regard to the future of the peace process in the region.

Nonetheless, those same results are necessarily linked to what takes place in the occupied territories and Israel. Israeli officials have flooded the entire region with their recent statements that Rabin's "early return" is basically due to what they regard as "new developments."

The problem, however, remains, as it has always been, in the Israeli Government's perception of what is happening now and what will happen in the future.

Obviously, this official Israeli perception is leading toward implementing more restrictive measures in the occupied territories. How can this be rationalized in light of the very high-sounding talk about speeding up and intensifying the steps toward peace? And how can one conceive of such restrictive measures, which could include a siege, as being compatible with participation in the ninth round of negotiations?

The responsibility for answering these questions lies with the U.S. Administration, in which Rabin found an excellent ally which supports all his positions, plans, and schemes. As sponsor of the peace process and as a full partner in the talks, it is also responsible for providing us with the necessary clarifications about the six points raised with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Washington has ignored those points and has come out in full support of Rabin. This will, in fact, give him a free hand to take any action and adopt any position without the slightest "admonition" from the White House.

This makes one wonder if Washington is aware of the dimensions of Arab and Palestinian anxiety and if this awareness will be translated into steps on its part that will enhance confidence in the future of the peace process and ensure that all the parties reach the negotiating table for the ninth round.

Rabin U.S. Trip 'Utter Failure' for Peace Process

TA1803173193 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 Mar 93 p 9

[Editorial: "Clinton and the Clarity of U.S. Priorities"]

[Text] Rabin's official visit to Washington and his meetings with U.S. officials, headed by President Clinton, were very successful in terms of the bilateral relationship between Israel and the United States. In addition to a U.S. pledge to maintain the annual U.S. aid to Israel at its present level for the next four years and raise this level if the political process moves forward, Israel also obtained favorable responses from the U.S. Administration on bolstering strategic cooperation and conducting joint scientific and technological projects. Moreover, Israel obtained a U.S. pledge to maintain Israeli military superiority over the combined Arab armies.

With regard to the deadlocked political process, Israel emerged from Rabin's meetings in Washington with great gains as well. Those can be summarized in three basic points:

First, the U.S. President's remark that the deportee issue was not discussed during the Israeli-U.S. meetings

although it is common knowledge that this is the reason for the deadlock in the negotiating process. The Arabs and the Palestinians had been convinced and had hoped that this issue would be at the center of the talks if the negotiating process is to continue. The U.S. President's insistence, however, that the deal that his secretary of state struck with Rabin will remain the framework in which the Americans will move came as a strong blow to varying expectations.

Second, Clinton clearly supported the Israeli interpretation in the argument between Israel and Syria over the aim of the negotiations. The U.S. President stressed that peace between Syria and Israel should include "full normalization, diplomatic relations, open borders, commerce, tourism, and human relations, all of which would be the fruit and the best guarantee of peace." In addition, he stressed that "Israel's security must be guaranteed." Clinton, however, failed to mention that in exchange for "full normalization" Israel has to carry out a "full withdrawal" from the occupied territories.

Third, Clinton, who underscores his concern for human rights, did not even allude to the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories or call on Israel to shoulder its responsibility to respect the relevant international norms and charters. Amazingly, his statements seemed to indicate that Israel is suffering from the occupation, and he affirmed his sympathy with its positions.

Rabin's visit to Washington has shown without any doubt the nature of the "unique relationship" that binds the United States to Israel. Rabin will return to inform the Israelis that "they have a friend in Washington." Clinton has proved his utmost "goodwill" toward Israel. The U.S. President may have done so to gain the support of influential circles inside and outside Congress for his domestic economic plan, but he definitely failed to convince the Palestinians and the Arabs of the new U.S. Administration's lack of bias toward Israel. Therefore, the visit might be very successful for Rabin and Israel, but it was an utter failure in terms of giving the necessary signals for advancing the political process, which is not only deadlocked but is reeling under the effect of negative pressures and indications. The meaning and significance of "full U.S. partnership" has now become very clear. It is now our responsibility to draw the necessary conclusions.

Problems Facing Israeli Prime Minister Viewed

LD1803230193 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Brothers, the Israeli prime minister surely must have realized brilliant successes in Washington. He was right when he said to the newsmen: I will return to Israel and will tell my people that they have a new friend in the White House. This success perhaps constitutes one of the elements that prompted him to cut short his visit and decide to return to Israel before the end of the week.

The viewpoints of Clinton and Rabin were in agreement and identical. The question of the deportees was ignored. The talks did not touch on any Palestinian demands. Clinton rather pledged to apply pressure on Arab sides including the Palestinians to establish peace in the area this year. On the military level, agreement was reached to raise the level of strategic cooperation and strengthen the level of Israeli military superiority.

President Clinton explained that this decision is aimed at preparing Israel, from the security point of view, for the possibility of signing peace agreements in the Middle East. There is also talk about moving the U.S. 6th fleet in the Mediterranean so that it is anchored at Haifa harbour and this falls within this framework.

This alliance will give Israel the confidence in security perhaps because of its compliance with the requirements of realizing peace. It appears that these decisions are part of the U.S. strategy in the area. But despite this warm reception accorded to Rabin and all the achievements he realized in Washington Rabin looks as if he is not going to have the pleasure of reaping their fruits. When he returns to Israel he will find things have deteriorated to the degree that might lead to the resignation of his government. Rabin's future as a prime minister is threatened by storms.

The religious Shas [Torah Observing Sephardim] party is threatening to drop out of the Rabin Labor Government which has a small majority. Rabin will be compelled to form a new government. What form the new government would take remains an ambiguous matter that will be revealed in the coming days. And if this crisis is not enough, clashes in the occupied areas have reached boiling point. In the Gaza Strip the struggle is getting fiercer and Israel has stepped up the repression against the people there.

There have been voices calling for a unilateral withdrawal from the strip. And there were other voices that wanted all the outlets of the strip to be closed. Rabin will return to find all these problems waiting on his desk in front of him as prime minister and as defense minister. If Rabin is not quick enough to take decisive measures it is expected that conditions will sink completely and this will take the struggle to a greater heights and to more disturbances against Rabin's successes in Washington there is a feeling of the failure of the Israeli policies and measures in the occupied areas. Closing areas and introducing curfews in other places are no longer effective measures to deter Palestinians. Actually, steps like these might bring other citizens into the fray.

Observers say that Rabin will be needing a miracle from heaven to enable him to get out of these rings that surround him. If Rabin is going to return from Washington armed with material and military American backing, he will find that this backing is not enough. He has to find ways to stop the violence. Military force is not the answer and there can be no end to this violence except by talking to the Palestinians and speeding up

meeting the aspirations of this long suffering people. If Rabin does this it will not mean weakness but it will mean strength and self-confidence. Will Rabin reach this point and turn this crisis which has been with us for 25 years with its agonising memories, into a thing of the past and no tears will be shed over it? Or will Rabin want to continue to be stubborn?

Factions Say U.S. Creating Islamic Scare

JN1803204193 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The 10 Palestinian [anti-peace process] factions today issued a statement on the International Day of Jerusalem, which says:

Today is the 14th anniversary of the International Day of Jerusalem, declared by Imam Khomeyni to liberate Jerusalem from the cancerous gland, the Zionist state. This anniversary comes about amid events that confirm our sound vision, and when rabid voices are heard loud from the capitals of colonialism and the capital of global arrogance, Washington, against our Islamic and Arab nation. They are trying to instill fear in the hearts of their nations from Islam and hostility toward it, replacing the communist scare with the Islamic fundamentalist scare.

The statement affirms the resolve of our revolutionary Palestinian people to make efforts and sacrifices. It points out that the International Day of Jerusalem is a day for awareness of the cause and a day to reaffirm our adherence to our full right to a free Palestine.

The statement adds: The blessed intifadah has transferred the mechanism of resistance to new horizons unifying the scattered elements of struggle all over to pour into the Palestinian river in Jerusalem. Muslims and honorable people worldwide are dutybound to pool their efforts to support the intifadah.

The statement goes on to say: The enemy leaders have acknowledged their defeat before the strikes of the mujahidin. However, the interference of the logic of surrender and the acts of relinquishers insist on trying to undermine the intifadah and sabotage its roads which are paved by the blood of martyrs.

The statement stresses the importance of resistance and rejection of submission, the way the deportees in Marj al-Zuhur are doing, who have resolved to pursue their heroic steadfastness, thus creating an impasse for the Zionists and their U.S. allies, which they do not know how to escape. The resolve of the struggler deportees to implement Security Council Resolution 799 stipulating their unconditional return must bring about the Zionist entity's submission, for the first time, to a resolution issued by the United Nations. This will give a lesson worthy of contemplation, because Zionists have always refused to yield to any resolution issued against them. The United States always finds a way out or a justification for Zionists and supports their position which hides behind international resolutions, while resolutions against Arabs and Muslims are enforced harshly and without any delay.

The statement concludes: Jerusalem remains our great dream for which we will make sacrifices. It will also remain the bone of contention of the global conflict between absolute right and absolute falsehood. Jerusalem is the center of history. It is the compass of every struggler, because it is the symbol and proof of either the unity or disunity of Muslims and Arabs; their pride or humiliation; progress or backwardness; freedom or slavery. It is the cause of every Muslim and every Arab oppressed in this age. Let the International Day of Jerusalem be a day to revive determination, and on this day let the banners of resistance, rejection, awareness, and identification with our steadfast brothers in Jerusalem, fly high. Let voices be raised against the conspiracies of relinquishment; let the flimsy negotiations stop; and let those who claim representation of our Palestinian people withdraw from these negotiations.

Glory to Jerusalem; glory to the intifadah; glory to martyrs; and freedom to the prisoners and detainees.

'Arafat, British Envoy Discuss Peace Process

LD1803194793 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, received today Mr. Michael Tate, the British ambassador to Tunisia. At the meeting they examined the progress of the peace process and the Israeli obstacles to thwart it by banishing hundreds of Palestinians from their homes and the abuses of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories. Brother President Abu-'Ammar reiterated that the escalation of the Israeli criminal acts should warrant swift international measures to protect our Palestinian people, reaffirming the need for Britain and the rest of EC countries to play a major role and take practical measures at the UN Security Council to put an end to Israel's policies of state repression and terrorism against our people. The meeting was also an opportunity to examine topics of mutual interest.

Algeria

Official Dies of Wounds Received in 'Islamists' Gun Attack

LD1803151193 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Political violence in Algeria: Yesterday, as the funeral service was being held for the former higher education minister, Djilali Liabes, who was murdered on Tuesday, a further attack was carried out by the Islamists—this time Hedi Flissi, a doctor and writer, and a member of the National Consultative Council was shot dead by extremists. [passage omitted]

We have learned today that another member of the Algerian National Consultative Council, Hafid Senhadri, who received serious bullet wounds on Sunday, has just died of his injuries. Hafid Senhadri was a member of the National Committee for the Safeguarding of Algeria, a committee created at the beginning of 1992, which was opposed to the continuation of the legislative elections, the first round of which, you may remember, was won by the Islamic Salvation Front.

Leadership Holds Dialogue With UGTA, Other Associations

LD1703111593

[Editorial Report] Algiers APS in English on 16 and 17 March transmits various Algiers-datelined reports on the Higher State Council's dialogue meetings with parties and organizations that include the following:

At 1133 GMT on 16 March the agency states: Members of the Higher State Council (HCE) cabinet held a meeting Monday, in the frame of the carrying on of the dialogue with representatives of several social and professional associations. This meeting, chaired by the HCE head of cabinet, Mohamed Said, was attended by delegates of the Union of Algerian Doctors (UMA), the National Association of the Public Administration Executives, the Union of Algerian Architecture and the Association of Assistance to Cancer Patients (FADJR). Representatives of the General Confederation of Algerian Economic Operators (CGOEA) and the Association of Graduates of the National School of Administration (ADENA) took also part in this meeting. It is worth recalling that the first meeting with social and professional associations was held Saturday and concerned some commercial, financial and agricultural associations.

At 1008 GMT on 17 March APS reports: "In the frame of meetings with political parties, associations and personalities, the Higher State Council (HCE) under the chairmanship of Ali Kafi audienced yesterday here a delegation from the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) led by its secretary general, Abdelhak Benhamouda", a communique from the HCE indicated. "The UGTA made concrete proposals on the content of the period of transition and on the revision of the constitution on economic and social prospects as well as conditions of the anti-terrorist struggle", the communique added, before concluding: "A great convergence of view appeared between the HCE and the UGTA on the constants of the nation, values of the republic as well as forms and means to make the country go out of the crisis".

At 1011 GMT on 17 March the agency adds: The Higher State Council (HCE) audienced yesterday here a delegation representing the Association of Students of the National Liberation War, the Federation of the National Associations of Handicapped, the Association for the Creation and the Promotion of Enterprises, the Feminine Movement for the Solidarity with the Rural Family, the Algerian Association of Infancy and the Algerian Association of the Family Planning. During this meeting which comes in the frame of the dialogue initiated by the HCE with the political parties and associations, the HCE was represented by Slimane Cheikh, counsellor in charge of youth, education and culture, Mohamed Merzoug, counsellor in charge of communication and Benyoucef Baba Ali, counsellor in charge of diplomatic affairs.

Socialist Forces Front Boycotts Dialogue With HCE

LD1603131593 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The Socialist Forces Front [FFS] has decided to boycott the dialogue with the Higher State Council [HCE]. This news item was reported to us by our correspondent Hamza Wahib, who is at the FFS headquarters where a news conference is being held.

The FFS has taken this decision claiming that the HCE put forward a unilateral agenda to the political parties as the latter did not participate in its preparation. The second reason is the absence of effective participation of the National People's Army in this meeting.

Trade Official Confers With Visiting Iraqi Trade Minister

JN1603190993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Algiers, 16 Mar (INA)—[Iraqi] Minister of Trade Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has met here with Mustapha Mekraoui, Algerian minister delegate for trade.

An INA correspondent in Algiers said that the two ministers discussed aspects of fraternal bilateral trade cooperation and prospects for its promotion.

The meeting was attended by the Iraqi ambassador in Algiers.

Egypt

Al-Baz on Dispute With Sudan, Other Issues

NC1803144793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has said that Egypt is one of the countries qualified to have a say and genuine influence in every issue the developing world experiences in light of the international changes that will accompany the new world order.

He said: This role will affect the new world order if we keep the country together and preserve its safety and social fabric and if the country gets stronger so that divisions do not affect progress.

Speaking at a seminar he held at the cultural salon in al-Duqqi Hunting Club last night under the theme "Egypt and the new world order," al-Baz stated that political, social, and economic stability in Egypt will enable it to maintain security and stability in the Middle East. He added that this will also enable Egypt to protect the region from incoming thinking, such as the extremist ideas that use violence and terrorism, by relying on its own capabilities and continuous cultural effect on the region.

He noted that terrorism is an important and dangerous issue that cannot be played down in Egypt or in the region. The world, he said, has begun to speak about Islam as if Islam represents this phenomenon and uses Islam as a synonym for terrorism.

Al-Baz said he believed an honorable peace could be achieved on an all-Arab front—with Syria, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon—and stated his belief in the possibility of the cordon states establishing peace ties with Israel.

He said: I am not among those who fear that peace with Israel will compromise Arab interests. Take the example of Egypt: Peace between Egypt and Israel has not led to an invasion of the Arab market or the Israeli cultural invasion that many feared. He said the Egyptian and Arab culture will always block any Jewish cultural invasion and that Israel is not in a position to invade Arab minds.

He said the Israeli nation's attitude is now different from what it was and that most Israeli Labor Party leaders believe in Yigal Alon's line, which calls for withdrawal from 75 percent of the West Bank. He said these Israeli leaders might accept an amendment, that they also want to withdraw from Gaza, and that they are now talking seriously about withdrawal from the Golan.

He said that in light of new international trends and the disappearance of polarity from the international arena, Israel now finds itself unable to do what it did in the past and launch a war on neighboring countries. [passage omitted]

On whether our Constitution needs to be amended, especially as it speaks about socialism, which has now collapsed, al-Baz said: The collapse of socialism does not mean the collapse of all concepts, certainly not the concept of social justice. Specific precepts govern Egypt and the regime cannot afford to ignore them. The domestic front must be prepared if the question of amending the Constitution is to be considered.

On political party activities in Egypt, al-Baz said: For several reasons, political party activities in Egypt have not risen to the level we would like, especially as these activities ceased after the revolution. There are many people who are involved in political activities who were not before the revolution. He said it is in the state's interest to promote party activities.

Al-Baz went on to say that party activities in Egypt are still being formulated and constantly developed and everyone should be involved in them, not only the state. He added: We should be careful that this development takes place gradually and that Egypt does not lose sight of its priorities in specific fields. Giving an example of this, he said that Egypt placed the issue of liberating its territories as its priority and then switched this priority to developing the economy.

On the dispute with Sudan, al-Baz said: We do not want to create any disputes with Sudan, because there are very strong ties that bind the two peoples. We are almost one people and Sudan will always remain our twin. He added: Regrettably, some problems emerged with Egypt after British colonialism, such as the Hala'ib issue. These became national issues preoccupying the Sudanese people. Al-Baz said: There is one international treaty between ourselves and Sudan that stipulates that Sudanese territories lie south of the 22d parallel. Neither we nor Sudan need to increase our territory. The time has come to end this problem, which the regime in Sudan has fabricated from time to time since the end of British colonialism.

He added: There is another point that affects our relations with the regime in Sudan, namely that we have some evidence of Sudan's involvement in terrorist actions in Egypt.

Professors Return From Khartoum, Situation 'Worse'

NC1803161293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1506 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Some 125 Egyptian professors and faculty members from Cairo University's Khartoum branch, along with members of the educational and al-Azhar missions in Sudan, returned to Cairo this afternoon.

The educators said students continue to demonstrate against the decision to revoke the license of the Cairo University's Khartoum branch. They said that the situation is getting worse and the Sudanese authorities are using tear gas to disperse the demonstrations.

They added that Sudanese authorities have arrested 19 demonstrators, including four female students. Some of them were publicly whipped. The Sudanese authorities also seized the passports of some members of the Egyptian educational mission.

A returning member of the al-Azhar mission said that Sudanese authorities asked him to vacate his family's house, in order to give it to a Sudanese citizen instead, thus forcing him to return to Egypt.

Education Minister Denounces University Takeover

NC1803215893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1026 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Education Minister Dr. Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din has stated that the Sudanese regime controlled by Hasan al-Turabi's front causes provocative incidents and escalates the situation with Egypt because of Sudan's domestic problems. The latest step in this escalation was the takeover of Cairo University's Khartoum branch.

Addressing a meeting of the Education and Scientific Research Committee of the People's Assembly presided over by Committee Chairman Ahmad Fu'ad 'Abd-al-'Aziz, the education minister said: Despite staff shortages in some specialized fields in Egypt, we sent them teachers and professors. He said a decision has been made to transfer Egyptian students in Sudan to Egyptian universities. The government, represented by the Foreign Ministry, he said, is acting to preserve the installations and property of the Egyptian education mission there.

He said the Egyptian consular mission will supervise Egyptian students whose circumstances require them to stay in Sudan, adding that the Foreign Ministry has informed the Sudanese ambassador in Cairo of this measure.

Government, Security Officials To Be Relieved

NC1803195393 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1926 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The political leadership is planning to carry out changes in government and security posts. The changes will involve certain state officials and a number of governors and security directors. The officials will be relieved of their posts for failing to execute the government's instructions to confront terrorism and implement the development plan.

President Husni Mubarak had recently received reports about the increasing differences within the Council of Ministers and among the governors and popular leaderships and members of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council.

It has been reported that some governors were in Cairo when terrorists and extremist operations were carried out in their governorates.

Cairo Said To Seek 'Abd-al-Rahman's Extradition

PM1903113193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Cairo Preparing Official Request for Extradition of 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Egyptian authorities are getting ready to ask Washington to hand Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman over to Egypt after the decision expected to be made soon by the U.S. immigration magistrate regarding the "mufti of al-Jihad."

The Egyptian authorities are also preparing to bring Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman to trial for the recent terrorist crimes committed in Egypt, particularly against tourists, in the light of the confessions made by fundamentalists currently on trial in the military tribunal in Cairo.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Robert Pelletreau has sent an urgent report to his government about 'Abd-al-Rahman's position and his responsibility for the recent acts of violence in Egypt against foreign tourists, to be added to the file on the mufti of the organization ['Abd-al-Rahman] before the U.S. immigration magistrate.

The sources also referred to the written statement made by Hisham 'Abd-al-Zahir, one of the organization's leaders, before the high military court admitting full responsibility for the acts of terrorism and admitting that Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman was leading them [the culprits] from the United States. That is considered an official document incriminating the mufti of the organization.

People's Assembly Approves Policy Statement

NC1803191593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1820 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—The People's Assembly approved the government policy statement presented by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi [on 28 December 1992] by a majority vote, thus confirming the Assembly's vote of confidence and support for the National Democratic Party government led by Dr. Sidqi.

People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Fathi Surur noted that he had received a message signed by 25 deputies rejecting the government's statement.

In his reply to the debate on the government policy statement, Dr. Sidqi stressed that the government policy

is based on firm principles that express the conscience of society, democracy, supremacy of law, protection of the citizens' freedoms, honest rule, social peace, and economic development. He added that the government continues its policy of strengthening these principles and that there will be more democratic practices and economic and social developments despite what is being said and despite the violations by some.

Speaking about terrorism, the prime minister said no one disputes the need to confront terrorism and eliminate its dangers and that all the people denounce terrorist operations.

He appealed to all individuals and groups, particularly writers, to take Egypt's interest into account in their writings.

Praising the police for resisting the terrorist operations, he urged that they should not be left alone in confronting the terrorists. He said that we must rally behind them to eliminate this negative phenomenon. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Discusses Domestic Situation

NC1803221593 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 2000 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Defense Minister General Husayn Tantawi today met 2d Army field officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers. He reviewed the political and military situation and its effects on various policies and strategies. He also dealt with the domestic situation.

In his address, Gen. Tantawi discussed the strategic policy on the south, noting that the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples remain linked by close sacred ties. He said that well over 4 million Sudanese live in Egypt and enjoy the same rights as Egyptians.

Gen. Tantawi affirmed that Egypt is keen not to allow the situation to reach the level of struggle and bloodshed. He said Egypt will not allow anyone to export dubious ideas to it, because Egypt has the al-Azhar scholars, who spread sound ideas worldwide.

Touching on the domestic situation, Gen. Tantawi said Egypt has always been a place of tolerance and of freedom of ideology.

Pointing to the great role of the Armed Forces, Gen. Tantawi said they will remain the example in terms of discipline, precision, and performance.

After the meeting, attended by the 2d Army commander, Staff Major General Majdi Hatatah, and senior Armed Forces officers, the defense minister answered every question broached by the officers and soldiers.

U.S. Seen Determined To Maintain Assistance

NC1803220893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1840 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation, has asserted that the U.S. Administration is determined to sustain foreign assistance to Egypt on its various levels during the new fiscal year beginning in October.

In a statement today, he said this determination was reiterated during recent Congress meetings on foreign aid. He said the assistant U.S. secretary of state told these meetings that Egypt has achieved noticeable success in applying economic reform policies since 1991.

The American official explained to Congress that the Egyptian public budget deficit dropped from 20 to 3.5 percent and that Egypt had standardized exchange rates, liberated interest rates, reformed customs, and restructured the public sector.

Dr. Makramallah received U.S. Aid Chairman Henry Bassford earlier today and discussed issues relating to bilateral economic cooperation.

Interior Ministry Confirms Arrest of Westerners

NC1803121393 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 15 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] The security authorities have arrested four foreigners on charges of exploiting the Christian religion to undermine Islam and incite sectarian sedition.

REUTER reported that an Egyptian Interior Ministry official confirmed the arrest of the four foreigners, but the official did not give any details. REUTER also quoted a spokesman for the four detainees as saying that they had been arrested on charges of inciting religious sedition. Randy Hoffman said police stormed the furnished apartment in central Cairo rented by the three Americans and one New Zealander, who works for the Industrial Systems Company. The company sells prefabricated houses, used computers, and other goods and is headquartered in Virginia.

The security authorities monitored the four's activities, observing that they mixed with Egyptians, asked them about their religious beliefs, and then explained to them the advantages of their non-Islamic beliefs.

It has been reported that an Israeli citizen is associated with the four and that he is a follower of extremist Rabbi Kahane, who was assassinated in the United States two years ago.

The public prosecutor has begun questioning the four. Authorities have invited representatives from the U.S. and New Zealand Embassies to attend the questioning.

Paper: 'No Alternative' To Combating Terrorism

NC1903114693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0714 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Cairo's AL-AHRAM newspaper says the confrontation with terrorism will not end until the terrorists discard all their weapons and stop the acts that are obstructing all steps to expand the circle of democratic dialogue in Egypt.

The newspaper's commentary today says it has become clear that there is no alternative for the people of Egypt other than to use all security and judicial means to chase these renegades who want to strike at the stability Egypt is enjoying and the economy that has started to take the course of progress, prosperity, and civilization.

The paper adds: We confirm that the strict confrontation of terrorism has no bounds and that it will soon capture everyone involved in terrorism—all those who prepare, incite, or implement these acts. The paper stressed the responsibility of the people in confronting terrorism.

The paper concludes: The time has come to stop this dangerous game so that the wheels of production, investment, tourism, and growth can start turning again to meet the needs and ambitions of citizens in providing work opportunities, a good standard of living, and appropriate services. This alone is capable of ending the schemes of terrorism to forcefully return us to the ages of darkness, backwardness, and dictatorship.

Nine al-Jihad Group Members Killed in Asyut

NC1803123293 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1026 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Major General 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hilali, assistant interior minister and director of the Asyut Security Forces Department, has announced that the security forces have arrested the members of a terrorist group that threw bombs at several places in Asyut. They also have arrested those who planned and directed these operations.

In an exclusive statement to our correspondent, al-Hilali disclosed that the security forces have arrested the members of this group, which has attacked pharmacies, sentry posts, and police vehicles. The arrested are Muhammad Salih Mahmud, 'Abd-al-Nabi Husayn 'Ali, and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Tawwab Muharram. The security forces also arrested Ibrahim Mahmud 'Abd-al-Hafiz and Safwat 'Abd-al- Tawwab, the men who ordered these operations. The members of the group provided significant information in their confessions on plans aimed at undermining law and order.

Regarding the incidents and successful raids by police on terrorist hideouts in all locations, a senior security source in Asyut said the security authorities are trying to identify who is financing the terrorists and indicated that the sources may be foreign. The security source asked: Where did the 4,000 Egyptian pounds, the more than 6,000 rounds of ammunition packed in boxes, and the automatic weapons and pistols found in the apartment of terrorist Ahmad Zaki al-Sharif, leader of the military wing of the al-Jihad Organization in Dayrut, come from?

The security source said that the people of Dayrut have expressed their support for the security forces in their campaigns against terrorists' hideouts in Asyut. He said that nine members of the military wing of the al-Jihad Organization have been killed in these clashes. They are military wing leader Ahmad Zaki al-Sharif, Anwar Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rajjal and his brother Mustafa, Ahmad Muhammad Khalif, Khalil 'Abd-al-Hafiz, Muhammad Khalaf al-Mughrabi, Ahmad Sayyid Hasan, who was leader of the group in west Asyut, Mukarram Ibrahim Shihatah, and Zayid Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hakim Radwan.

The source said that Ahmad Zaki al-Sharif, along with others, assassinated state security officer Lieutenant Colonel Mahran 'Abd-al-Rahim and his son in Sadfa. He participated in the attempt to assassinate another police officer in Dayrut. He opened fire on the tourist boat Nile Elite and a tour bus that was returning a group of Copts from a religious visit to Asyut. He participated in the attack on a bus carrying German tourists in Manfalut a month and a half ago. The other terrorists participated in other incidents, including the attempt to assassinate a police officer in Bani Qurrah, the burning of a bakery in al-Qawsiyah, the killing of citizen al-Sayyid 'Abd-al-Hafiz in al-Qawsiyah, and the attack on a police officer in Balluz.

Policeman Killed in Clashes Buried

NC1803173193 Paris AFP in English 1513 GMT 18 Mar 93

[by Laurence Chabert]

[Text] Asyut, Egypt, March 18 (AFP) - One of two policemen killed in gunbattles with Muslim militants was buried here Thursday [18 March] as security forces with machine guns patrolled the streets a day after the clashes.

A procession of about 100 people left a mosque in the Firyal district, scene of the worst of Wednesday's fighting which also killed 10 fundamentalists, and headed for the cemetery in Asyut, 350 kilometres (210 miles) south of Cairo.

Local authorities and religious leaders, as well as children exempted from school for the funeral, marched in silence behind a police car fitted with a loudspeaker which blared: "Down with terrorism."

One resident among a group of onlookers said police would "bury the fundamentalists in secret as they always do."

One of the Muslim extremists has been named as Ahmad Zaki, 25, a leader of the outlawed al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah group [the Islamic Group] which is waging a campaign to destabilize the country.

Zaki was known as "Robin Hood" by his supporters in the Asyut region, a fundamentalist stronghold in southern Egypt. He had been wanted for months on suspicion of organizing attacks on tourists and police.

About 100 people, including three tourists, have been killed in the al-Jama'ah campaign over the past 12 months.

A spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, which has no legal status but is tolerated by the authorities, blamed the government for the bloodshed. "The government is at fault because they refuse to implement Islamic principles," he said at Abu al-Jud mosque.

But most residents declined to discuss Wednesday's battle, which erupted when police stormed Muslim militant hideouts.

"It's over now. The police did their work and now everyone has a job to get on with and earn his living," said a man, who also asked not to be named.

Policemen armed with machine guns meanwhile patrolled the streets of Asyut and a unit stood guard outside the building in Ferial where fundamentalists kept police at bay for several hours before they were flushed out.

Four fundamentalists were killed in the building. Nine policemen were also wounded when a 350-strong force, acting on tips, raided hideouts in the Firyal, Al-Bisari and Al-'Arbayn districts.

The security forces rounded up 35 fundamentalists and seized thousands of rounds of ammunition for pistols, machine-pistols and Kalashnikov assault rifles.

Fundamentalists seized control of Asyut after the assassination of president Anwar al-Sadat in October 1981 and held it for four days before the army retook it, killing around 100 people.

Asyut Security Campaign Detailed

NC1803214493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2010 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—In a decisive confrontation between the police and extremist and terrorist elements in Asyut Governorate, a fierce battle raged at dawn yesterday in the biggest security campaign against two terrorist dens that sheltered a group of the most dangerous elements involved in planning and carrying out terrorist operations.

A responsible security source described it as one of the most violent confrontations recently undertaken against these terrorist elements, adding that it was a "fatal blow" to terrorism and terrorists.

The masses in general and of Asyut in particular were very satisfied with the campaign. In Asyut, popular marches were staged after firing between the two sides stopped. The people denounced the terrorists and expressed their appreciation of the police and their sacrifices to strengthen security and stability.

The funeral of the police officer martyred in the campaign was also another popular demonstration that rejected and condemned terrorism.

The confrontation occurred only a few days after a major campaign on al-Badari island in Asyut, which extremist elements used as a venue for their meetings and to plan terrorist operations. They tried to exploit the island's location, thinking it would be difficult for police to reach. For the first time, the police used Armed Forces' helicopters to reconnoiter the area and strike at the terrorists.

The campaign was a major success; extremist and terrorist leaders were eliminated and others were captured.

Receiving confirmation of the presence of two of the most dangerous extremist elements in a hideout in central Asyut and of other elements in a different hideout in the governorate, a plan was hatched to launch a major security campaign to strike at the two hideouts simultaneously and apprehend the dangerous elements.

A responsible security source has asserted that the success of the campaigns in Asyut will contribute greatly to preventing antitourist operations, attacks against the police force, and attempts to stir sectarian sedition in Upper Egypt.

Security sources have revealed that the 10 terrorists killed in yesterday's campaign included one of the most dangerous extremist elements, 25-year-old primary school teacher Ahmad Zaki al-Sharif. He was the primary suspect in an attack against a tourist bus in Dayrut in which a British tourist was killed. He was also involved in the killing of 14 Copts in Dayrut.

Al-Sahrif was also accused of firing on and wounding the chief of Dayrut police station in the leg, killing martyr Lieutenant Colonel Mahran 'Abd-al-Rahim of the State Security Investigation Department in Asyut, and killing security guard Dusuqi Sanabu and stealing his weapon.

The sources add that unemployed Ahmad Khulayf, 30, was among the elements killed in the campaign. He was one of the most dangerous elements to take part in several terrorist operations.

In one of the hideouts, the security bodies yesterday found 4,000 Egyptian pounds, 6,000 7.62-mm automatic rifle shots, 11 automatic rifles, five revolvers, and some empty shells. [passage omitted]

Members of 'New Terrorist Organization' Arrested

NC1803220693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2140 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Egyptian security forces have arrested the members of a new terrorist organization after investigations revealed their involvement in terrorist operations and strikes against tourists. A report to be run in the 19 March edition of AL-WAFD says the organization members infilterated into Egyptian territory and that they confessed to their involvement in recent terrorist incidents.

Security sources have stated that 66 Sudanese nationals, arriving from Sudan via Libya along the al-Sallum road, have been interrogated and returned to their country. It has been decided to prevent them from entering the country.

The paper notes that seven Sudanese nationals have requested permission to stay in Egypt, saying that it has become impossible for them to live in Sudan. Their request are currently under consideration.

AL-WAFD adds that there is serious evidence that condemns the ruling military regime in Sudan and the Iranian regime and links them with anti-tourist attacks in Egypt and the establishment of camps to train terrorists and provide them with funds and weapons.

The paper adds that the security forces have concluded a comprehensive survey of all land and sea inlets to prevent terrorists from infiltrating into the country.

Helicopters were used in reconnoitering the desert and the rugged roads that terrorists use to enter the country.

AL-WAFD notes that the security forces in Alexandria have apprehended 681 members of extremist groups. They are being interrogated to determine their association with terrorist incidents.

Al-Azhar Imam Discusses Amending Laws

NC1803151893 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 Mar 93 p 6

[Excerpt] The al-Azhar grand imam, His Eminence Shaykh Jad-al-Haq 'Ali Jad-al-Haq, has said that the state made the Islamic shari'ah the main source of most of the country's laws. The state, he added, does not obstruct the Islamic call or fight genuine religion, but looks after the affairs of Islam both in Egypt and abroad. His eminence stated that not one mosque has been closed to worshipers. All mosques, he added, are open for prayers, worship, recitation of the Koran in the last 10 days of blessed Ramadan, and to spread the genuine teachings of Islam, but not for aggression or disturbing the nation's security and independence. He said murder and extremism are not signs of Islamic awakening, but run counter to Islam's teachings and principles.

The imam made his remarks in response to questions from an audience at the Islamic Enlightenment Seminar at the al-Mursi Abu-al-'Abbas Mosque in Alexandria. The al-Azhar imam said the state cannot eliminate deviation on its own. It is a collective responsibility to defend Islam, the image of which has been distorted by a deviant minority ignorant of the affairs of the noble religion, he added. This minority, he said, imposes its views by violence, not through dialogue and reasoning. He called for the need to teach the Islamic shari'ah, along with a regular curriculum, in every law and police college, because laws in Egypt derive from the Islamic shari'ah and since those who apply the law, whether in the judiciary, prosecution, or police, must be well versed in the Islamic shari'ah. They should also propose amending laws, which, when applied, may turn out not to be in line with it, he added. [passage omitted]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Summons FRY Envoy, Condemns Milosevic

LD1903105693 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0946 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Tripoli, 19 Mar (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] has summoned for the second time the ambassador of the new Yugoslavia—which includes Serbia and Montenegro—to the Great Jamahiriyah, due to the recent Serbian air raids on Bosnian Muslims.

The leader asked the Yugoslav ambassador to explain why the Serbian forces have been challenging UN convoys carrying relief aid for Muslims. He also stressed the need for the new Yugoslavia to do its utmost with the Serbs and Bosnians to prevent any further challenges to the convoys, even if it came to asking the Libyan Arab People's Bureau there to provide a vehicle flying the flag of the Great Jamahiriyah to lead the relief convoys and enable them to pass through safely. This was within the framework of the Great Jamahiriyah's continued effort and study of the problem in the region formerly known as Yugoslavia and of assuming its internationalist role in resolving that problem, since the United Nations and other parties have failed in that regard.

The leader said that Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic has become known in the world as a butcher and killer and that he has harmed the Serbs' friends, which had made it difficult for them to resolve the problem.

The Yugoslav ambassador assured the leader that his country has officially condemned the recent air raids, pointing out that each party in the conflict in the region has an air force.

Sudan

Garang's SPLA Announces Unilateral Cease-Fire

AB1803115093 Paris AFP in French 1112 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Nairobi, 18 Mar (AFP)— The Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA], in war in southern Sudan with the central power, announced today that it will observe a unilateral cease-fire as of Thursday, 18 March, at 1200 GMT, the movement's leader, Mr. John Garang announced in a communique published in Nairobi.

"The cease-fire is aimed at promoting a conducive atmosphere for the upcoming Abuja II peace negotiations," Colonel Garang said. He also indicated that the SPLA combatants had received the order to stop military operations against the government forces "except in self-defense."

Col. Garang and representatives of the government met at Entebbe (Uganda) last month and agreed to meet a second time at Abuja for peace negotiations at a date that remains to be set.

Foreign Minister Denies Iranian Ships Present

AB1803194093 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, the foreign minister, has denied Egyptian claims of the presence of Iranian ships in Port Sudan harbor. He confirmed that Sudan was still demanding the return of conditions within the Hala'ib triangle to what they were before October 1992, so that the members of the technical committee dealing with the problem could continue discussing ways of solving the problems between Sudan and Egypt. Dr. Abu-Salih added that Sudan, for its part, would not escalate the situation and that Egypt was fully aware of the cause of the present escalation in the relations between the two countries.

Tunisia

Cooperation Agreement Signed With Mauritania

LD1903042393 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The work of the fourth session of the grand Tunisian-Mauritanian joint committee was concluded with the signing of the minutes of the session and the executive program for Tunisian-Mauritanian cooperation for 1993-94. Foreign Affairs Minister Habib Ben Yahya and his Mauritanian counterpart Mohamed Abdrahmane Ould Moine signed the documents at a reception held this afternoon at the ministry headquarters.

At the reception Ben Yahya affirmed the resolve of the two countries to continue along the path of strengthening bilateral cooperation. He referred to the new horizons that are open for Tunisian-Mauritanian cooperation and added that the coming days will witness the signing of other new agreements, especially in the transport sector, so that current obstacles in the way of trade exchanges will be overcome. Concluding, he explained that the coming visit of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to Mauritania will give a new push to bilateral cooperation.

Mohamed Abdrahmane Ould Moine confirmed that the success of this session is considered new mortar in the road of strengthening bilateral cooperation and building the edifice of the Maghreb. He emphasized his country's resolve not to spare any effort for the sake of cooperating with Tunisia and to bolster and diversify this cooperation and to strengthen further fraternal relations between the two countries in accordance with the directives of Presidents Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

[Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic at 2300 GMT on 18 March carries a longer report on today's meeting and the signing of the cooperation agreement, adding the following:

["As the two sides believe in the importance of the media sector, they agreed to strengthen cooperation in this field. The Communications Ministry has decided to give a television station to the Mauritanian television service as a gift for receiving Tunisian television programs.

["The two sides also paid attention to the health sector. Tunisia will soon send a team of heart specialists to Mauritania.

["The two sides also paid attention to the political field. The talks and the results arrived at by the fourth session of the joint committee produced a complete identity of views of the two countries regarding regional and international issues of mutual interest."]

Saudi Arabia

Muslim Fundamentalist Leader Freed After Week in Saudi Jail

NC1803202493 Paris AFP in English 1858 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Amman, March 18 (AFP)—The Muslim fundamentalist leader of Islamic Jihad Kata'ib al-Aqsa, who is close to the PLO, was freed Wednesday after being detained for a week in Saudi Arabia, the movement said Thursday.

The organization said in a statement issued here that the arrest of Shaykh Fayiz al-Aswad was based on "false information provided to Saudi authorities by enemy intelligence services," which it did not name.

The cleric had travelled to Saudi Arabia on an official visa issued for him to perform a mini pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, the movement said.

The Islamic Jihad Kata'ib al-Aqsa split in August 1990 from the Islamic Jihad Bayt al-Maqdis and has from Amman claimed several anti-Israeli attacks, notably a triple murder in Jerusalem in October of that year.

United Arab Emirates

Regime To Cooperate With India in Bombings Investigation

NC1903114293 Paris AFP in English 1100 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Report by Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Dubayy, March 19 (AFP) - The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has assured India it will cooperate in the investigation of bomb attacks in Bombay and a police official said two main suspects would not be allowed to leave.

"They are in Dubayy and we know where they are," a Dubayy police source said when asked about the Memon brothers, who have been accused by New Delhi of involvement in last week's blast that killed almost 300 people and injured 1,250. "We have instructed all entry points not to allow them to leave," he added, while refusing to make any further comment.

Indian police say Yakub and Ismail "Tiger" Memon along with their four brothers and families fled to Dubayy hours before the first of a dozen bombs ripped through Bombay last Friday.

They are believed to have entered on a visitors visa sponsored by an Indian businessman. It was not clear if that man is the Bombay underworld don, Dawood Ibrahim.

Ibrahim, also linked to the blast, has been living in Dubayy for several years. Nearly half the 350,000 Indians living in the UAE are based in Dubayy.

In Bombay, police commissioner Amarjit Singh Samra said the bomb attacks were probably hatched in Dubayy.

Quoting what it described as a senior Indian government source, the Dubayy-based daily KHALIJ TIMES said New Delhi had asked for the extradition of the two suspects and the UAE assured it of cooperation. It said the two brothers plus three other members of the Memon family were in Dubayy.

"We have made a request for the extradition of the Memon brothers to the UAE Government and we have been assured of cooperation," it quoted the unidentified source as saying in New Delhi.

Another Dubayy-based daily, GULF NEWS, said India had supplied the UAE with details about the suspects and asked it not to allow them to leave.

Indian ambassador in Abu Dhabi, Ranjit Sethi, declined to answer questions on whether the UAE would hand over the suspects. "I have no comment at the moment. We will let you know soon," he said.

The UAE and India do not have an extradition treaty but diplomats believed the emirates would not turn down an extradition request given their strong relations. They recalled Dubayy's extradition of six Sikh extremists who hijacked an Indian airliner to the emirate in 1984.

The diplomats also cited a UAE statement condemning the Bombay explosion and all forms of terrorism. Sources close to the Indian Consulate in Dubayy said New Delhi might send a delegation to explain the case to the UAE Government.

The KHALIJ TIMES, quoting other sources at the Indian Foreign Ministry, said New Delhi had dispatched some evidence against the Memon brothers to the UAE and would provide additional information when police unravel more about the attack.

Kurdistan Parliament Approves Government's Resignation

NC1803174893 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The Kurdistan Parliament has approved the resignation of Dr. Fu'ad Ma'sum's government by a majority vote. During its meeting this morning, the Parliament paid tribute to the efforts of Dr. Ma'sum's government and the ministers' sincerity and devotion in discharging their duties.

The Parliament also approved the Interior Ministry's bill and discussed problems facing the people and ways to solve them.

'Analysis' Says Iran Raids Had Coalition Forces 'Blessing'

JN1903094193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has said that Saturday's Iranian raids on Raniyah area in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate in northern Iraq have exposed the falsity of the coalition forces' claims about concerns for the safety of the Kurds.

It is known that since 1991 the United States and its western allies have been imposing a no-fly zone on Iraqi flights in the northern part of the country under the pretext of protecting the Iraqi Kurds from their country's government.

In an analysis published today, the paper, the mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, stresses that the Iranian raids in the no-fly zone have caused political observers to raise questions on the validity of the justification used by the U.S., British, and French quarters to impose a ban on Iraqi flights in the northern part of the country.

The paper wonders why the coalition forces, whose planes are constantly circling the area, have not moved to respond to these raids and spare the Kurds the scandal and the consequences. The paper concludes that the no-fly zone was not established to protect the Kurds, but to harm Iraq's will and national unity and that concern for the Kurds' safety is only an unfounded claim.

The paper notes that the attack had the coalition forces' blessing and said the Iranian regime would not have dared to infringe on an Iraqi Kurdish area without the political and military cover provided by the allies. The paper draws the attention of the people in the area to this fact and urges them to escalate their rejection of the abnormal political conditions now existing in that area. The paper stresses that their only solution to protect themselves from the terror and tyranny of these quarters is to return to the canopy of the motherland under autonomy and the democratic experience that is based on the clauses of 11 March Statement.

AL-THAWRAH strongly attacked the agent Kurdish elements in the area and the role they played in bringing disaster to the Iraqi Kurds. The paper says these elements have fallen victim to political forgery and deception.

The paper also notes that Saturday's raids gave indications of Tehran's attitude. It says these raids have once again revealed the degree of the Iranian regime's arrogance, lack of political and military restraint, noncompliance with international laws or norms, and tendency to employ all means to spread havoc, fragmentation, murder, and sabotage.

The paper recalls the Iraqi leadership's analysis of the Tehran rulers' direction and objectives. It says the recent aggression in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate has given further evidence of the validity of Iraqi analysis of Iran's racist tendencies and aggressive objectives.

U.S. Planes Reportedly Dropped Flares Near al-Nasiriyah

JN1903102793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] New York, 19 Mar (INA)—Iraq has said that U.S. warplanes have dropped flares and broken the sound barrier over an area near al-Nasiriyah in southern Iraq.

In a memorandum sent to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, Iraq said that between 9 and 16 March, the U.S. planes carried out 478 hostile sorties over Iraq. Iraq also requested that the memorandum be filed as a Security Council document.

It is worth recalling that last autumn, U.S. warplanes dropped similar flares, which set fire to many cereal fields in Ninawa Governorate in northern Iraq before they were harvested.

Airspace 'Violations' Protested to Arab League

JN1903094693 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0840 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (INA)—Iraq has once again protested the continued violations of its airspace by U.S., British, and French warplanes flying from bases in Saudi Arabia.

In a letter he sent to the Arab League secrertary general, Iraq's permanent envoy to the Arab League said these warplanes, which flew from bases in Saudi Arabia, carried out 34 hostile sorties on 15 March. The letter asserts that the continued violations of Iraqi airspace by these warplanes constitute a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

Iraqi Permanent UN Envoy Meets Nonaligned Ambassadors

JN1803144693 Baghdad INA in English 1420 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 18, INA—Iraq's Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Nizar Hamdun met in New York last night ambassadors of the Non-Aligned states Security Council members.

INA New York correspondent quoted Mr Hamdun as saying in a press statement following the meeting that the viewpoints exchanged with the ambassadors were harmonious and agreed to the necessity of pursuing principles of justice and equity and rejecting the duality in the international dealing.

Mr. Hamdun also explained details of Iraq's positive practices in the joint cooperation with the Security Council.

Rabin Ends U.S. Visit, Comments on Talks With Butrus-Ghali

TA1903060393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin ended his visit to the United States last night and left on his way back to Israel aboard an Air Force plane. Prior to his departure, he conferred with UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali in New York and told him that Israel will not have the Arabs impede its fight against terror and does not make the continuation of the peace talks conditional on the Palestinians renouncing terror. Our correspondent Arye Golan spoke to the prime minister at the end of his meeting with Butrus-Ghali.

[Begin recording] [Rabin] He asked me about the talks I held in Washington. I explained that all of us, including the United States, hope the agreement I reached with the U.S. secretary of state concerning the deportees in Lebanon will be the basis for returning to the peace talks and that we believe the talks will resume. I explained to him Israel's position that we do not make the continuation of the talks conditional on the termination of terror and that we refuse to have the Arabs preventing us from effectively fighting terror with all the means the law allows us to use. The talks must continue because the real solution to the motives and causes of terror and violence lies in the political talks, around the negotiating table.

[Golan] Did he ask you to announce that Israel will no longer deport Palestinians from the territories?

[Rabin] I will not go into details, even if your assessment happens to be inaccurate.

[Golan] Sir, did you mention our POW's and MIA's in the meeting?

[Rabin] Certainly. I mentioned the three groups: the MIA's from the al-Sultan Ya'qub battle of June 1982: Baumel, Katz, and Feldman; the soldiers who were kidnapped by Hizballah and about whom we received information confirming their deaths: Alshekh and Fink; and the problem of Ron Arad. We do not have any clear data as to who is holding him now, although it is clear he is being held by pro-Iranian elements. These matters had been raised in preliminary talks. We received certain answers, on which I will not elaborate.

[Golan] Sir, the U.S. secretary of state said you had submitted creative ideas to President Clinton. Could you tell us whether these were new Israeli proposals concerning the Palestinian self-government?

[Rabin] I will not go into detail about the talks I held with the President. I am glad that some of the thoughts raised in the talks—it does not matter who raised them—were described as creative by the secretary of state.

[Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, I thank you very much, and have a safe trip home.

[Rabin] Thank you. [end recording]

Senior Sources Voice Disappointment

TA1903112093 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Mar 93 pp A1, A7

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar and Shlomo Shamir]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin returns home this afternoon without having achieved any change in the status of the peace talks. He will spend the coming days attending to security and coalition problems. Today Rabin has a scheduled meeting with Interior Minister Arye Der'i, and it was further agreed that shortly after his return, he will meet with Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef, the spiritual leader of SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim].

In a meeting yesterday, UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali told Rabin that if the peace talks are not resumed on 20 April as scheduled, the deportee issue will be raised again at the United Nations. Butrus-Ghali further voiced his belief that Israel has not implemented Resolution 799. [passage omitted]

Sir Michael Burton, assistant under secretary for Middle East affairs at the British Foreign Office, who arrived in Jerusalem on 17 March after a series of political meetings in Amman, has informed Israeli Foreign Ministry officials that he sensed Jordan will not return to the peace talks as long as the Palestinians stay away. His observations coincided with information received from other sources, according to which Syria, despite its obvious desire to return to the peace talks and to lead the Arab camp in the negotiations, is unwilling to be seen as the party that abandons the Palestinians.

The senior British diplomat disclosed in Jerusalem that the Jordanians are against the idea of a Palestinian state in the territories. They said they are aware that the Rabin government is the best government for the purpose of introducing peace arrangements to the region, and they are therefore very interested in resuming the talks. The Jordanians said they fear that a continued political stalemate will result in a surge of radical Islam in Jordan, but as long as the deportee problem keeps the Palestinians from joining the talks, the Jordanians cannot settle for the presence of only one-half of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation at the Washington talks. The Arab stand on the issue of rejoining the talks will be decided at a foreign ministers' meeting in Damascus on 28 March. [passage omitted]

Senior political sources in Jerusalem yesterday expressed disappointment with the fact that the meeting between Rabin and U.S. President Bill Clinton did not address any details of the Israeli-Arab negotiations and thus contributed nothing toward removing the obstacles preventing progress at the talks. According to reports on Rabin's talks received to date, the prime minister was not required to provide answers on the future of the Golan Heights, the dimension of the withdrawal from the Golan, or details of the arrangement with Syria which he prepared in anticipation of the meeting; neither was he asked to propose improvements in the human rights situation in the territories. Clinton and his aides made it clear that they will settle for the role of broker.

Early Return Considered

TA1903113793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Mar 93 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "Limited Success, or When Rabin Met Clinton—Three Postscripts"]

[Text] 1. The Return of the Conquering Hero

Like a scene out of an adventure film: Who drops everything? Who cuts his U.S. visit short to conquer the forces of evil that rose up against us in his absence? It is none other than our brave hero, Israel's prime minister. On the morning of 16 March, speaking very determinedly, he said he sees no reason to cut his visit short and that there is no need to be alarmed. A few hours passed—during which, incidentally, there were no additional terror attacks—and off he goes changing his mind and announcing that he will return 48 hours earlier than scheduled, thus adding to the scare he said we should avoid. Something is seriously wrong with his decision-making processes, or his aides, or both.

His return raises numerous questions: If it is true that, as the media reported, he said the people should not lose their cool or their endurance in the face of terror, why does he do the opposite? And if a political arrangement is the only solution to individual acts of terror, what will he do between Friday and Monday? Make an instant political arrangement? And if, as he said, there are no easy solutions to terror—to which the chief of staff responded by saying that there is no justification for shortening the visit—what will he do in the two extra days that could not be done later? Will he move mountains? Will he make Gaza sink into the sea? Hence the assumption that his hasty return has more to do with the condition of his government—SHAS' [Torah Observing Sephardim] threats to bolt the coalition and Peres' eye-catching performance—is not totally unfounded. If the lengthy visit was necessary, it should have been completed. If it was not, why was it scheduled to last nine days in the first place? This is a strange episode, but it is not surprising: Rabin simply panicked.

2. He Was Given a Deadline

It is a shame, a real shame that Rabin had to return earlier than planned. After all, his meetings with the new U.S. Administration were a success, as expected. It was expected because it is almost a tradition for any administration to give the red-carpet treatment to a new Israeli prime minister on his first visit to Washington. Although America got scared when Menahem Begin was elected in 1977, he was given the royal treatment on his first U.S. visit. Shamir was also received with great honors. Incidentally, these two received what Rabin did not: the status of a state visit (with the host paying the expenses). The fact that after the first visits the relations turned sour and the chemistry evaporated indicates that every prime minister is given a period of grace by the administration. In this respect, Rabin is no different from his predecessors. There is one difference, however: Unlike them, he promised to deliver the goods. He has yet to prove that the expectations of him are justified, that he has the ability, the political force, and the leadership qualities required to lead his country to an arrangement with the Arabs.

Listening to Clinton's public remarks and reading between the lines, one cannot fail to notice that the support for Rabin is conditional: Aid will not be cut as long as it contributes to the promotion of peace. Israel's qualitative edge will be maintained in order to bring peace closer and for as long as Israel stays in the process in good faith. Clinton did not forget to mention that his country's policy has not changed—meaning that Israel must give up on most of the territories for peace. If Israel takes risks for peace, the United States will help minimize the risks. In other words: We are with you on this for as long as you seriously march toward peace and are willing to make concessions to achieve it. It was not hard to notice Clinton's hints that he has neither the time nor the inclination to deal with nonsense, and this was apparent at the talks. No one should expect him to spend two weeks cooped up at Camp David debating semantics when he has more pressing problems than determining who will be in charge of the water and sewage systems in the West Bank. For example, there is the serious situation in Russia and the domestic problems which will determine the future of his administration. I believe that Clinton gave Rabin a deadline.

3. Time Is of the Essence

The strategic backup Clinton gave him is an important achievement for Rabin, but has a very short life span. Time is of the essence, not only because the U.S. credit will not be there forever but also because of the deteriorating situation in our region. Fundamentalist Islam is spreading like wildfire in the territories. Gaza is gradually becoming a nuclear bomb in the heart of Israel. The wave of terror attacks, be it individual or organized—and it is not clear which is worse—will continue to mount. All of the above, coupled with the fact that Rabin's government is losing public support, prove that we do not have all the time in the world. The coming months are Rabin's last chance to achieve a breakthrough in the peace process.

Had I been told that Rabin did not rush home to deal with SHAS or Peres but because he felt an urgent need to start working fast to begin preparing for peace, I would have praised him. After all, the time constraints compel him to adopt fresh and unorthodox ways of thinking. This means that this is the time to reexamine the applicability of the concept of taking small steps. The current explosive times force us to reconsider whether it is correct and practical to think in terms of five years of autonomy, of ignoring the real Palestinian leadership, of a phased withdrawal on the Golan Heights, and of several other elements that were only meant to gain time and which were good 15 years ago.

The current state of affairs, the deterioration in our domestic security, and the chance Clinton has given us call on us to skip the minute details, take big steps, and play for high stakes. Clinton is waiting for Rabin. So is Israel.

Rabin Seeks Mutual Compromise

TA1803174493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that misunderstandings between Israel and the United States must be prevented and that the parties should adhere to the understandings and agreements that have been made. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports from New York that Mr. Rabin was addressing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. He said that both countries should work together in mutual confidence and, if differences occur, they parties should clarify them rather than leaving them vague, which might lead to misunderstandings.

The prime minister expressed his hope that in the peace agreements that will be made with the Arabs both sides will make compromises. He said he hopes that the precedent of the peace with Egypt will not be repeated because there was no compromise there and Israel was the only one to pay a price for peace.

Speaking on the issue of war against terror, Mr. Rabin said that Israel will continue holding the peace talks as if there were no terror and will fight terror as if there were no talks.

The prime minister will fly to Israel tonight, after meeting UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali at UN Headquarters in New York.

[On its 1500 GMT newsreel, Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew on 18 March, carries a brief recorded report from New York by political correspondent Natan Gutman saying that, in his address before the Jewish leaders, "Prime Minister Rabin said that Israel is willing to make compromises for peace, but it is the U.S. role to diminish the risks Israel is assuming. This will be done by the U.S. expanding the security and economic aid to Israel. We should be compensated for the risks we are taking for the sake of peace, Rabin said." Gutman further said that Rabin denied that he is cutting his U.S. visit short because of the prospective coalition crisis.]

Tourism Discussed With Jordan, Syria

TA1703161193 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Ze'ev Peri]

[Text] Possible regional cooperation was discussed in unofficial talks between Eli Gonen, Tourism Ministry director general, and representatives of the Syrian and Jordanian Tourism Ministries at the Berlin Tourism Fair. The two Arab delegates agreed on the importance of cooperation and expressed hope that dialogue would continue. The Jordanian even asked Gonen to mail him Tourism Ministry plans for regional cooperation.

At the Syrian pavilion, Gonen discussed tourism's contribution to regional development at length with one of the Syrian officials. The Syrian expressed support for the peace process and expressed the hope that there would be future cooperation.

Russia's Bovin on Strategic Cooperation

TA1203144493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Russia's ambassador to Israel Aleksandr Bovin said that Russia and Israel share common strategic interests. [passage omitted]

In an interview with Qol Yisra'el in Russian correspondent Mikha'ela Bir, the Russian ambassador said that he had written an article on the subject at the end of 1992. Ambassador Bovin noted that at the beginning of 1993 he had said in an interview that Israel and Russia would establish strategic cooperation in 10 years. We have joint interests in combating religious fundamentalism, the ambassador said. Mr. Bovin asserted that any form of extremism should be opposed, including Islamic fundamentalism.

Cultural Agreement With Russia Initialed

TA1703170693 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 17 Mar 93 p 20

[Text] Education and Culture Minister Shulamit Aloni and Russian Culture Minister Yevgeniy Sidorov Monday initialed the first culture agreement between Russia and Israel.

The agreement will be signed in full during Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's visit to Russia. Under the accord, a joint committee will be set up to prepare the applications of the agreement. The committee will deal with encouraging the establishment of cultural centers in Russia and Israel and in strengthening ties in the fields of culture, education, and the social sciences.

It was also decided that the agreement will include an exchange of artists in the fields of theater, dance, the plastic arts, etc, with the main exchanges being between well-known institutions.

Tajik Deputy Prime Minister Arrives on Visit

TA1203113293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Mar 93 p A3

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Tajikistan Deputy Prime Minister Rostim Makhkamov [name and title as published] made a surprise visit to Israel this week. Jerusalem believes the visit

is important because Tajikistan is believed to have great influence in the Muslim world.

A civil war has been going on in Tajikistan between Muslims, who are known to be hostile toward Israel, and supporters of the previous communist government. Activists from the previous communist government have returned to power, bringing about a decline in the strength of the Muslims.

Tajikistan still has a large Jewish community, and businessman Sha'ul Eisenberg runs an agricultural farm there. Israel has avoided appointing an ambassador to Tajikistan because of the internal tension, and a member of the staff at its Moscow Embassy is responsible for ties with that country.

The Foreign Ministry was informed of the minister's visit by one of Eisenberg's employees only three hours before he landed here. In the absence of the foreign minister, the deputy foreign minister, and the Foreign Ministry director general, the guest was received by Eytan Bentzur, Foreign Ministry deputy director general. Makhkamov expressed the hope that his prime minister will be invited to visit Israel. He said his government hopes to strengthen ties with Israel, especially in the fields of agriculture and technical aid.

Makhkamov is accompanied by the Tajik agriculture minister and a delegation of senior officials.

Envoy Says Austrian Premier To Visit in 3 Months

TA1803115393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Austrian Prime Minister Franz Vranitzky is to visit Israel in three months time. This was conveyed by Israel's Ambassador to Austria Peter Aran, who noted that ties between the two countries have strengthened in the past month with visits by several ministers. It will be the first trip of an Austrian premier to Israel.

UNESCO Director Comments on Current Relations

TA1603185193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The director general of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, has praised Israel for not quitting the organization in the years when it was biased against Israel. At a news conference in Jerusalem, he dismissed the anti-Israel resolutions of that period and stressed the contribution which Israeli scientists could make to the surrounding countries. However, he expressed reservations about the expulsion of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] Federico Mayor recalled the United States and Britain withdrew from UNESCO for three reasons: Its attempt to restrict international news media, financial mismanagement, and the politicization of the organization. He praised the Israeli delegation for staying on, in spite of repeated anti-Israel resolutions. For example, condemning Israel's archaeological excavations beside the Temple Mount. I asked him how UNESCO feels about these excavations now.

[Mayor] Many things have changed, and one of the things that have changed is that the resolution was not a negative resolution has happened in the last years. [as heard]

[Katzenell] Is it still the view of UNESCO that Israel is threatening or even damaging Islamic or Christian archaeological remains or values of any other kind?

[Mayor] The answer is no.

[Katzenell] Federico Mayor is the first director general of UNESCO to visit Israel. He was to have come three months ago, but canceled his visit at the last minute because of the expulsion of the 400 Hamas activists. We asked him what he thought about this issue now.

[Mayor] I know as a Spaniard the importance of the measures to be taken against terrorism, but at the same time I know very well that the answer to violence is justice.

[Katzenell] And he refused to elaborate. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 16 March notes that in a luncheon with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, Mayor said that "Israel has some of the best scientists and technology experts in the world, and UNESCO is very interested in their integration in international projects." For his part, Peres said that "the improvement in relations with UNESCO opens new and broad possibilities for Israel's participation in its activities, and that this is to a great extent thanks to its director general."]

Three Killed, Over 130 Injured in 16-18 Mar Gaza Riots

TA1803194693 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] In the Gaza Strip today, two men were killed and dozens injured by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers' fire. One of the fatalities is from Rafah and the other from Khan Yunus, where severe clashes took place today as well. Over the past three days, the IDF has prevented Israel Television crews from covering the Khan Yunus riots. Palestinian sources reported today that 60 people were injured by security forces' fire, while the IDF spokesman has so far reported that there were 25 casualties.

Our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay notes that since the curfew imposed on Khan Yunus was lifted three days ago, three residents have been killed and over 130 injured by the security forces' fire.

[At the close of this newscast at 1930 GMT, Israel Television in Hebrew adds: "Following our earlier report that two men were killed in the Gaza Strip, the IDF reported that the two were killed by Arabs."]

Chief of Staff: Palestinians Must Accept Army Activity

TA1903065893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] The chief of staff, General Ehud Baraq, says the events in the territories in the past few days are not a rerun of the beginning of the intifadah. Baraq said that in the past three days, three people were killed and 130 wounded in clashes in Khan Yunus and Rafah. The chief of staff expressed regret over the casualties but said the Palestinian population would have to accept Army activity even if it does not like it.

The chief of staff was speaking to Qol Yisra'el's military correspondent at a leave-taking ceremony for the head of Central Command, Dani Yatom, who has been appointed the prime minister's military secretary.

Arab Wounded Near Hebron; Body Found in Tulkarm

TA1603084993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] A school janitor from the village of Yattah, south of Hebron, was wounded this morning. He was apparently shot by the guard of a fuel tanker, who fired shots after the tanker was pelted with stones.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the body of Nasir 'Ali Ahmad, 24, was found with gunshot wounds in Tulkarm last night. Tulkarm residents say the youth was shot by settlers. They claim that an Arab driver saw the body and stopped his car. At that point, the windows of his car were smashed by stones thrown by settlers who were nearby.

On the other hand, Ahuva Kohen, from the settlement of Har Brakha, told our correspondent that settlers who were returning from the funeral of Ya'aqov Brakha found the body lying on the road. A physician and policeman who were on the bus transporting the settlers examined the body and established that the youth was dead. The settlers then alerted the Army and awaited the arrival of the soldiers. Kohen claims that the settlers did not throw stones in the area.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 16 March in a page A3 report by Eytan Rabin adds: "The security forces are examining the circumstances surrounding the death of a resident of Hizma in the Ramallah District. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] sources say the body of Salim Mahmud Salim al-Din, 30, bearing gunshot wounds, was found under a pile of stones near an abandoned building yesterday morning. Palestinian sources say the murder may have been motivated by suspicions of collaboration, but they are not ruling out the possibility of its having been an act of revenge perpetrated by settlers."]

Official Supports Ban on Arab Workers; Others React

TA1203183693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The National Religious Party has decided to submit a motion of no confidence in the government because of what it calls the unacceptable deterioration in personal security in the country. [passage omitted]

The chairman of the Labor Knesset faction, Eli Dayan, agrees that in order to stop the bloodshed, Israelis should halt the employment of Arab workers from the territories. Dayan says that the international community should establish special projects in the Gaza Strip to enable Palestinians to work on their land.

The Peace Now movement this evening issued a statement calling on Prime Minister Rabin to return home from Washington with a detailed peace plan, so as not to allow despair and extremism, as they put it, to result in more victims. The movement condemned the murder of Simha Levi and Yehoshu'a Friedberg, but said that only a solid and speedy peace would end the violence, not deportations or cutting off of contacts.

Rubinstein on Unemployment Benefits for Gazans

TA1603124793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Energy and Infrastructure Minister Amnon Rubinstein has proposed that Israel find ways to keep the younger residents of the Gaza Strip busy locally and even pay them unemployment benefits.

In an interview with Qol Yisra'el, Minister Rubinstein stressed that Israel should separate itself from the Gaza Strip without carrying out a unilateral withdrawal. In his opinion, Israel should announce a date on which power would be turned over to a Palestinian representation. Meanwhile, Rubinstein asserted, Israel should make efforts to improve security and create jobs in the Gaza Strip.

Majority Backs Unilateral Gaza Pullout, Call To Bear Arms

TA1903090793 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 19 Mar 93 p 2

[Public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[Text] Question: Are you for or against a unilateral pullout from the Gaza Strip?

Answer: In favor—53 percent; against—34 percent; no opinion—13 percent.

Question: Taking into account all considerations, including the risks, is the call for Israelis with gun licenses to carry their personal weapons justified or not justified?

Answer: Justified—68 percent; not justified—30 percent; no opinion—2 percent.

The poll was conducted by telephone on 15, 16, and 17 March. It comprised 511 respondents who constitute a representative sample of the Jewish population.

Ben-Eli'ezer, Palestinian Figures Address Media Seminar

TA1603095193 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 16 Mar 93 p 8

[Report by Yosef Galili]

[Excerpt] "Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is wrong if he believes he can settle for attaining peace with Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, and leave the Palestinians on the sidelines. The example of the deportee affair has proven that terror and the intifadah only intensify following deportations. Peace in the Middle East can only be made with the Palestinians. Otherwise, there is the danger that an escalation in the activities of the Islamic fundamentalists will result in a civil war based on religious differences, similar to that waged in Ireland." These remarks were made yesterday by Hanna Sinyurah, adviser to the Palestinian peace talks delegation. Sinyurah was addressing the participants in a seminar on "The Media in the Peace Process" held at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel in Jerusalem.

The seminar is being attended by senior editors from the electronic media and newspapers in 167 countries. The guests decided to come to the region to study Israel's handling of the peace process firsthand.

Da'ud Kuttab, a political commentator for the East Jerusalem- based AL-QUDS, said the authorities are harassing the Arabic press and the residents of the territories. He condemned the Israeli authorities' negative response to the Palestinian request to set up a radio station, which could help in keeping in touch with the population, the majority of which believes that the success of the peace process is the only choice it has. To this end, a radio station should be allowed to be set up in Gaza.

Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, who also addressed the seminar, said that "a meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin could provide a shortcut on the road to a peaceful solution. I hope that such a meeting will indeed take place," the minister said, and the audience applauded.

Ben-Eli'ezer added that an agreement with the Palestinians could be signed within three months, with the exclusion of several issues such as security and water. I believe that the Palestinians will overcome their difficulties, because the alternatives are far worse, he said. "Israel is willing to take risks for peace. The door is open, and we will take up the challenge with the Palestinians," he said. [passage omitted]

Katyushas Fired at Security Zone; SLA, IDF Return Fire

TA1903083993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Three Katyusha rockets were fired during the night at an SLA [South Lebanese Army] position in the (Alamin) area in the security zone. No casualties or damage were reported. Sources in Lebanon told our correspondent Yo'av Aviv that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the SLA responded with cannon and mortar fire at terrorist targets and at the sources of the firing.

Defense Official Comments on Arrow, Procurements

TA1803115093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The director general of the Defense Ministry, David 'Ivri, says more test launches of the Arrow antiballistic missile are expected in the near future. Interviewed in the Israeli journal TEKHNOLOGIYOT [TECHNOLOGIES], 'Ivri said he has no doubt about the operational capability of the Arrow missile. Its development, he said, is only a matter of money.

On another matter, 'Ivri said Israel would decide this year between the F-16 and F-18 fighter planes and sign a contract with one of the manufacturing factories next year. He said the decision depends in part on how cooperative the individual companies are willing to be with Israeli industries.

'Ivri also said plans by the Israeli Navy to purchase a pilotless plane have been scrapped due to budgetary constraints.

Minister Der'i Urges Coalition Expansion; Sarid Opposes

TA1803202193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Minister Arye Der'i said this evening that SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] is at a crossroads on the issues of peace and security and the time has come for it to reconsider its positions. According to him, in its current form, the coalition cannot deal with the security problems. He said that the coalition should be expanded and that SHAS representatives will raise this matter when they meet Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

At the same time, he added that political elements that believe SHAS to be the coalition's soft spot have been organizing demonstrations in front of Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef's [SHAS spiritual leader] house to pressure the

movement. According to him, there are some who are cynically attempting to exploit the situation for political gain instead of worrying about security. Minister Der'i noted in this context that even the Likud leaders attended yesterday's Knesset vote on lifting Knesset Member Pinhasi's immunity. He said that this was all done in a bid to establish a narrow right-wing or national unity government.

Minister Yosi Sarid said in response that there is no need to expand the coalition and that Meretz will not be a part of a government that does not promote peace.

Likud To Submit No Confidence Over Security, Unemployment

TA1303201793 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 13 Mar 93

[Text] The Likud Knesset faction is about to submit a motion of no confidence in the government. Our Knesset affairs correspondent Ya'agov Ahime'ir reports that Knesset Member Moshe Qatzav, the Likud faction chairman, has explained that the no-confidence motion is being submitted in view of government's failure to guarantee personal security and because of its inability to face up to the failure. The motion is being submitted also in connection with the growing unemployment.

The NRP [National Religious Party] is also submitting a motion of no confidence over the deteriorating internal security.

Poll Shows Dissatisfaction with Government, Ministers

TA1203151593 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 12 Mar 93 p 1

[Poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute managed by Mina Tzemah, with commentary by Yesha'yahu Ben-Porat]

[Text] What grade would you give the government and each of the following ministers? (The answers are in percentages)

	Very Good	Good	Not Good	Not Good at all
Government	2	47	33	17
Prime Minister	9	44	31	15
Defense Minister	9	33	38	18
Foreign Minister	22	45	18	11
Finance Minister	10	46	26	7
Housing Minister	12	40	27	9
Police Minister	6	36	37	17
Education Minister	18	29	21	30

Commentary: The government and some of the above ministers received a good to very good grade from only half of those polled or slightly more. When we compare these findings with those of similar polls in the past it shows that the public is not satisfied with this government. For example, in April 1989, the percentage of those pleased with the unity government was 70 percent, with the then Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin receiving 75 percent backing, compared to 42 percent now. Even compared to a similar poll held only two months ago, there has been a sharp drop in the level of public support for the government and its senior ministers.

Hizballah Said To Have Planned Attacks on Americans

JN1803172893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] In Amman today a senior Jordanian security official revealed that Jordanian border police last month detained two individuals who tried to smuggle weapons into Jordan with the intention of attacking American tourists. The official said that the two individuals came to Jordan from Syria in a Lebanese-registered car. The official said that automatic weapons and explosives were found in the car when it was inspected.

It was said that the two individuals belong to the Hizballah organization. When interrogated, they admitted that they had planned attacks on American tourists during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent visit to Jordan.

Rabin U.S. Visit Said To Increase Israeli Intransigence

JN1903113993 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 19 Mar 93 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Washington Is Supporting Israeli Intransigence"]

[Text] Now that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has concluded the political part of his U.S. visit, including his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and other senior U.S. Government officials, one can safely say that the only result these talks have yielded has been increased Israeli intransigence, not to mention the escalation of bloody Israeli practices in the occupied territories.

This negative result, which was widely expected, came into being despite the extensive U.S. preparations, particularly the tour of the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and his resounding declaration that Washington intends to play the role of a full partner in the negotiations and that the administration of President Clinton is determined to work hard to advance the peace process and the bilateral negotiations.

Judging by the initial signals coming from Washington and the statements attributed to Rabin and senior U.S. officials, one can safely say that the Israeli prime minister's Washington visit has hardened the Israeli Government's position and caused this government to show intransigence with regard to the requirements for holding the next round of bilateral negotiations. One can even say that this visit has entrenched the obstacles standing in the way of peace efforts, if not created additional obstacles obstructing these efforts.

While observing this Israeli boasting in the aftermath of Rabin's U.S. visit, which was cut short due to the explosive situation in the occupied territories, and while noticing this savage and bloody Israeli conduct against the Arabs of Gaza Strip and the West Bank, one bitterly wonders what the phrase "full partner" could mean. Given all this, one also wonders about the significance of the role being played by the United States as part of its efforts to advance the peace process, particularly since the obstacles standing in the way of this process have remained unaddressed, as if the full partner had no views of its own and as if it had nothing to say about these obstacles, for which Israel bears full responsibility.

Similarly, while viewing the results of Rabin's Washington visit and the concomitant meaningless U.S. pledges to maintain Israel's qualitative edge over the Arabs as well as the new promises Israel received to enable it to perpetuate its occupation of Arab territory, we would like to say that we have doubts about the ability of the United States to play an effective role in the stumbling peace talks, regardless of the impartiality it claims and any other attributes it may choose to use to characterize itself and its endeavor. This is especially true since Israeli practices on the ground belie any wagers on the possible undertaking of any endeavor by Washington to play the role of an honest broker or a full partner in the stalled peace process.

'Text' of Press, Publication Draft Law

JN1503152993 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 15 Mar 93 pp 5, 6

["Text" of Jordanian draft Press and Publication Law for 1992 as approved by both houses of parliament]

[Text] Article 1: This law shall be called "The Press and Publication Law for the year 1992." It shall come into force 30 days after the date of its publication in the official gazette.

Article 2: Unless the context requires otherwise, the following words and terms in this law shall have the meanings shown below:

Ministry: The Ministry of Information.
Minister: The minister of information.
Director: The director general of the Press and Publication Department.
Association: The Jordan Press Association.
Person: The natural or corporate person.
Publication: Any means of publication in which words or shapes are shown in letters, pictures, drawings, pressings, or engravings.
Periodical: A specialized press publication of all types that is issued regularly and includes: A. Press publication, including:
1. Daily publication: A publication issued daily and regularly under a certain name and serial number and is prepared for distribution to the public.
2. Non-daily publication: A publication issued weekly or at longer intervals, and is prepared for distribution to the public. B. Specialized publication: A publication specialized in one or more subjects in specific areas and is prepared for distribution to those concerned in it or the public as stipulated in its issuance license.

C. News agency bulletin: A publication that is prepared to provide press institutions with news, articles, pictures, and drawings whether daily, weekly, or monthly.

Journalism: The profession of editing and issuing press publications.
Journalist: Every person who meets the conditions stipulated in the valid Press Association law or who takes journalism as his profession and is registered with the Association.
Printing Press: Equipment used to produce publications of various types and shapes. This definition does not include typewriters and duplicating or photographic machines.
Bookshop: A shop licensed to sell books, stationery, newspapers, magazines, and other publications.
Publishing House: An institution undertaking the preparation, production, and sale of publications.
Distributing House: An institution undertaking the distribution or sale of publications.
Advertising Agency: An office undertaking commercial advertisement and publicity, producing relevant material and publishing or disseminating them through the news media.
Studies and Research Center: An institution that conducts studies and researches and gives advice in the social, cultural, economic, humanitarian, and other areas.
Public opinion polling center: An institution in charge of conducting field researches with the aim of exploring public opinion about a certain subject through questionnaires or other legitimate polling means.
Translation house: An institution undertaking translation from one language to another, including simultaneous translation.

Article 3: Both the press and printing are free and freedom of expression is guaranteed for every Jordanian. He shall be free to express his opinion through speech, writing, photography, and drawing in all means of communications.

Article 4: The press shall freely exercise its task of presenting news, information, and commentaries and shall contribute to the dissemination of thought, culture, and sciences within the limits of the law and within the framework of safeguarding public liberties and obligations, as well as respecting the private life of others and its sanctity.

Article 5: The freedom of the press shall comprise the following:

A. Informing citizens of facts, ideas, trends, and events in the fields which interest the community on the local, Arab, Islamic, and international level.

B. Enabling citizens to publish their opinions.

C. Ensuring the right to obtain information, news, and statistical data of interest to the citizen from their various sources, and to analyze, circulate, publish, and comment on them within the limits of the law.

D. The right of the press publication, the news agency, the editor, and the journalist to keep secret the sources of their information unless the court decides otherwise in the process of a criminal case to protect state security, prevent a crime, or to serve justice.

E. The right of citizens, political parties, cultural and social professional unions to express their views and opinion, and to publicize their achievements in their respective fields of activity through the publications.

F. Official and nonofficial quarters shall facilitate the task of the journalist and the researcher to view their programs and projects.

Article 8: Publications shall refrain from publishing what conflicts with the principles of freedom, national responsibility, human rights; shall respect the truth and the values of the Arab and Islamic nation; and shall treat the citizens' right to free expression and to information as their own.

Article 9: The journalist and all those working in the press shall meticulously abide by the ethics and rules of conduct of the profession, including the following:

A. Respect for the rights of individuals, for their constitutional liberties, and for their private lives.

B. Present the news in an objective, comprehensive, and balanced manner.

C. Pursue accuracy, integrity, and objectivity in comments on the news and events.

D. Refrain from publishing anything that might incite violence, bigotry, hatred, or calls for racism and sectarianism.

E. Refrain from using press material to promote or disparage a commercial product.

Article 10: Periodicals shall depend on legitimate, declared, and specific sources of funds and are not allowed to receive material support or directives from any foreign country or outside party.

Article 11: The publisher of the periodical shall provide the director with a copy of its annual budget, including all the statements about its revenues, its funding sources, and its financial status.

Article 12: Journalists, and all those working in the press, are prohibited from having any working relationship with any foreign party unless this takes place in accordance with the regulations governing foreign media correspondents issued under this law.

Article 13:

1. Each press publication must have an editor in chief who:

A. Must be a journalist.

B. Must be fluent in reading and writing the language of the periodical of which he is the editor in chief. If the periodical is issued in more than one language, he should be fluent in the principal language of the periodical and should have sufficient knowledge of other languages.

C. Must not be editor in chief of more than one periodical.

D. Must not perform any other duties at the periodical of which he is the editor in chief or at any other periodical.

E. Must not have been convicted of any crime or misdemeanor involving honor or public conduct.

F. Must be a permanent resident of the Kingdom.

2. Except for what is stated in Clauses B, E, and F, the provisions of the previous paragraph shall not apply to the editor in chief of a publication issued by a party.

Article 14: The editor in chief of a publication is responsible for what is published in it. The owner of the publication and the writer of the published article also share responsibility.

Article 15:

A. A specialized publication must have an editor in chief responsible for what is published in it, and who:

1. Must be Jordanian.

2. Must not have been convicted of a crime or misdemeanor involving honor or public conduct.

3. Must have academic qualifications related to the field of specialty of the publication or experience in that particular field to make him eligible for that post.

B. A non-journalist has the right to be editor in chief of a specialized publication whose interests are within his specialization.

Article 16: Each publication house, opinion poll center, translation house, advertising agency, printing press, distribution house, and bookshop must have a director who:

A. Must be Jordanian.

B. Must not have been convicted of a crime or misdemeanor involving honor or public conduct.

C. Must have the following academic qualifications and experience:

1. He must at least hold the first university degree and have appropriate experience in his field after obtaining the degree, which will be assessed by the minister, if he is to be appointed as director of a center for studies and research or for opinion polls.

2. He must at least hold the general secondary school certificate and have appropriate experience in his field after obtaining the certificate, which will be assessed by the minister, if he is to be appointed as director of a publication or distribution house, printing press, bookshop, translation house, or advertising agency.

Article 17: A person cannot act as director of more than one institution of those named in Article 16 of this law.

Article 18: The owner of a periodical:

A. Must be Jordanian residing in the Kingdom.
B. Must not have been convicted of a crime of misdemeanor involving honor or public conduct.

Article 19: A. A license to publish a press publication may be obtained by the following:

1. A journalist as defined by this law and who meets the requirements enshrined in the law.

2. A press company established and registered for the purpose of publishing press publications. Non-Jordanians are not allowed to have shares in such companies.

3. Political parties.

B. The Council of Ministers, upon recommendation of the minister, is authorized to issue licenses to publish bulletins to the following:

1. To a Jordanian news agency.
2. To a foreign news agency on condition of reciprocity and provided that the responsible chief editor of the bulletin is a Jordanian journalist.

C. The government or any of its organizations may not be licensed to publish any political press publication, daily or otherwise.

D. When this law comes into force, the shares of the government, government institutions, or the funds thereof must not exceed 30 percent of the capital of the press company or organization. In case government contributions to such companies or organizations exceeds 30 percent, the situation must be rectified within two years of the date this law goes into effect. The required redistribution of shares must result in the distribution of only 30 percent of the capital among these parties in accordance with the percentages of their contribution to the capital of the press company or organization. Excess shares are submitted for public subscription by the companies controller at the Ministry of Industry and Trade for the duration of time he sees fit.

E. The provisions enshrined in Paragraph D of this article apply to any single party specified in the paragraph if it is the sole government-affiliated contributor to the capital of the press company or organization. This applies if the percentage of this party's contribution to the company exceeds 30 percent.

F. The Council of Ministers may double the duration of the period mentioned in Paragraph D of this article, or extend it to periods, the total of which should not exceed twice this period.

Article 20. Application for a license to issue a press publication shall be submitted to the minister. The Council of Ministers, upon the recommendation of the minister, shall make its decision on the application within 30 days. A decision by the Council of Ministers to deny a license shall provide the reasons for denial and be subject to litigation at the Higher Court of Justice.

Article 21. The application for a license to issue a press publication must include the following:

A. The name of the applicant, his place of residence, and his address.
B. The name of the publication as well as its place of issue and printing.
C. Dates of issuance, specifying whether it is daily, weekly, bimonthly, or quarterly, etc.
D. Its specialty, whether it is political, literary, or economic, etc.
E. The language or languages in which it will be issued.
F. The name of the responsible chief editor, his age, his place of residence, his address, his qualifications, and his experience.

Article 22. Application for a license to issue a specialized publication is submitted to the director on the form provided for that purpose. The minister, upon the recommendation of the director, shall decide on the issue within 30 days. A decision by the minister to deny license shall provide the reasons for this denial and be subject to litigation at the Higher Court of Justice.

Article 23: A. Applications for obtaining a license to establish a printing press, a publishing house, a distributing house, a studies and research center, a public opinion polling center, a translation house, or an advertising agency shall be submitted to the director on the form provided for this purpose. The minister, upon recommendation of the director, shall decide within 30 days, and a denial of license shall be subject to litigation at the Higher Court of Justice.

B. Procedures for applying to obtain the license stated in Paragraph A of this article, including changes in or amendments to the contents of the license and procedures for ceding it, shall be defined in accordance with regulations to be issued under this law.

Article 24:

A. A license for a daily newspaper will only be granted if its registered capital is not less than 50,000 Jordanian dinars, 50 percent of which has to be paid.

B. A license for a non-daily press publication will only be granted if the registered capital is not be less than 15,000 Jordanian dinars, 50 percent of which has to be paid.

C. Daily and a non-daily press publications, which any political party wishes to issue, are exempt from the minimum capital requirements stipulated in both Paragraphs A and B of this Article.

Article 25: The owner of the press publication must print his name, the name of the responsible editor-in-chief, the place and date of the issue, the subscription rate, and the name of the printing press where it is printed, clearly and in a prominent place. He also must notify the director of any change in or amendment to the license within 30 days of that change or amendment.

Article 26: Except for the press publications of political parties, the license of any publication may be revoked in any of the following cases:

A. If it is not published within six months of the date of issue of the license.

B. If the press publication ceases to publish for the following durations without a legitimate reason:

1. A daily publication for three continuous months.
2. A weekly for 12 consecutive issues.
3. Other non-daily publications for four consecutive issues.

Article 27: A license for a press publication is granted in accordance with the terms of this law. The owner can cede his ownership partially or wholly under the following conditions:

A. That the owner should notify the director of his desire to cede the publication 30 days in advance of the transaction.

B. That the new owner should have met all the conditions under which he can own part or the entire publication.

C. That the new owner should submit an application to the director 30 days prior to the transaction.

D. That the owner should cede the publication at the ministry under regulations the minister prescribes for this purpose.

Article 28: If the press publication publishes an unfounded report or an article containing inaccurate information, the person who is the subject of the report or the article is entitled to reply and ask for a correction. The responsible editor-in-chief must publish the reply or the correction for free in the issue that follows the date of the reply and in the same place and typeface as the original report or article.

Article 29: If a press publication publishes an incorrect report or an article which contains incorrect information concerning the public interest, the responsible chief editor shall publish free of charge a written reply or correction sent by the concerned party or by the director in the next issue following the date of receiving the reply or correction and in the same place and using the same typeface in which the report or the article appeared in the press publication.

Article 30: The provisions of Articles 28 and 29 of this law shall apply to any press publication that is issued outside the kingdom and distributed inside the kingdom.

Article 31: The responsible chief editor of the press publication shall have the right to refuse to publish a reply or correction which he receives in accordance with the provisions of Articles 28 and 29 of this law in any of the following cases:

A. If the press publication has accurately and sufficiently corrected the report or the article before receiving a reply or a correction.

B. If the reply or the correction bears a false signature or is written in a language other than that in which the objected report or article were edited.

C. If the content of the reply or the correction violates the law or the public order or if it is contrary to public conduct.

D. If the reply comes at least two months following the publication of the objected report or article.

Article 32: If the party responsible for any publication that is issued outside the kingdom and distributed inside the kingdom refrains from publishing the reply or correction in accordance with the provisions of Article 30 of this law, the director can ban the publication's entry into the kingdom constantly or for a period of time that he deems appropriate.

Article 33: The names and addresses of the author and the publisher, the printing house, and the date of printing shall be written in every publication.

Article 34: The responsible chief editor does not have the right to publish any article for any person under a false name unless the writer gives his real name to the chief editor.

Article 35: The name of a press publication that had been issued and ceased to be issued cannot be used for a new press publication until the passage of at least five years since it ceased to be published unless the persons concerned or their heirs relinquish that name before this period expires.

Article 36: The owner of a press publication shall keep regular accounts in accordance with accountancy principles. The director shall at any time have the right to review all the data and accounts pertaining to the publication. He shall also have the right to inspect them and ensure that its owner is committed to the financial controls stipulated in this law.

Article 37: The owner of the printing house or its responsible manager shall observe the following:

A. Keeping a register to sequentially record in it the addresses of the books which he prints, the names of their authors, and the number of copies printed for each. He shall show the register to the director or to an authorized person.

B. He shall provide the Press and Publications Department two copies of every non-periodical printed in his printing house before distributing them.

Article 38: He who wishes to print a book in the kingdom shall submit two copies of his manuscript to the Press and Publications Department before printing begins. The director shall have the right to either permit or ban its printing if it contains material whose publication is banned by the law, provided that the director notify the book's author of his decision within 14 days after its submission. The author or the book's publisher shall have the right to litigate the director's decision at the Higher Court of Justice.

Article 39: The owners of a bookshop, a distributing house, or a publishing house shall submit to the director a copy of every publication imported from outside the kingdom before distributing or selling it in order to receive permission for its distribution or sale. The director shall have the right to refuse to issue a permit and to ban the entry of the publication into the kingdom if he sees that its circulation will harm the public interest. The owner of the bookshop, the distributing house, or the publishing house shall have the right to litigate the director's decision at the Higher Court of Justice.

Article 40: A. A publication is prohibited from publishing the following:

1. News that touches on the king and the royal family.

2. Any information on the number in the Armed Forces, their arms and ammunition, or their movements unless the publication of such news is authorized by a responsible authority in the Armed Forces; as well as any news report, sketch, or commentary that touches on the Armed Forces or the security agencies.

3. Articles and items degrading any of the religions or sects whose freedom is guaranteed by Constitution.

4. Articles which may harm national unity, inspire crimes, or spread hatreds and sow the seeds of rancor, disunity, or discord among the members of society.

5. The proceedings of the parliament's closed sessions.

6. Articles or news reports aiming at shaking confidence in the national currency.

7. Articles or information which include a personal insult to heads of Arab, Islamic, or friendly states or the heads and members of the diplomatic missions accredited to the kingdom.

8. Articles or news reports that infringe on the honor of individuals or their personal freedom, or tarnish their reputation.

9. News reports, letters, or pictures that violate ethics and public decency.

10. Advertisements for medicines and medical materials unless such advertisements are authorized in advance by the Health Ministry.

B. Foreign publications that contain any of the materials prohibited by this law will be denied entry.

Article 41: The clauses of this law concerning prohibited foreign publications do not apply to the publications imported by government institutions, universities, and scientific research centers, provided the director's prior approval is obtained.

Article 42: The publication of court proceedings in any case presented to the court is prohibited before a final verdict has been passed, unless the court itself approves the publication of such material.

Article 43: If a publication publishes any news item or report for a paid fee on behalf of any individual or party, the item must clearly and unequivocally be labelled as an advertisement.

Article 44: The owner of any press publication, or its chief editor, managing editor, or any other editor, correspondent, or regular writer—in his capacity as the owner or employee of that publication, or because of his profession or employment in it, or the exercise of his profession in, or connection to that publication—is prohibited from receiving any financial aid or gift from any local or foreign party without the minister's approval.

Article 45: The owner of any printing press or its managing director is prohibited from printing any publication whose printing, publication, distribution, circulation, or sale has been barred; or any unlicensed or prohibited publication.

Article 46: A. The court of first instance shall look into all crimes committed in violation of this law. The prosecutor general shall investigate such crimes. The court shall pass the proper judgment in accordance with the powers and procedures stipulated in both the criminal trials law and the penal code currently in force.

B. In the crimes of periodicals stipulated by this law, a lawsuit shall be filed against the chief editor and the writer of the article as the principals. The owner of the press publication shall also be responsible for under any civil litigation, and shall bear with the chief editor and writer the cost of the case. The owner shall not be held responsible under any criminal prosecution unless it was determined that he was an accomplice.

C. Lawsuits arising from the crimes of non-periodical publications stipulated by this law shall be filed by the state prosecution against the writer as the principal and the publisher as an accomplice. If both the writer and publisher are not known, the owner of the printing press and its manager will be prosecuted.

D. The owners of printing presses, bookshops, and publishing and distribution houses are considered responsible, in association, for the violation of civil rights and for court expenses incurred by their employees in cases under the provisions of this law.

Article 47: A. The court that issued the ruling can order the convicted party to publish—at no cost—the entire verdict or a summary of it in the first issue of the periodical following the announcement of the verdict in the same place and in the same typeset in which the original article appeared . The court also can decree, if it deems necessary, that the verdict or a summary of it be published in two other papers at the cost of the convicted party.

B. If the convicted party violated the provisions of Paragraph 1 of this article he shall pay a fine of not less than 100 dinars and not more than 500 dinars and shall still be required to publish the verdict, which he refrained from publishing, at his own cost.

Article 48: If the responsible chief editor of the press publication violated the provisions of Articles 28 and 29 of this law he shall pay a fine of not less than 500 dinars and not more than 1,500 dinars in accordance with the injured party's complaint.

Article 49: A. If any of those mentioned in Article 44 of this law violated any of its provisions he shall be imprisoned for a period of not less than four months and not more than six months or shall pay a fine of not less than 4,000 dinars and not more than 6,000 dinars, or both. However, if the owner of the publication is a legal entity it shall pay a fine of 6,000 dinars.

B. The court can rule that any amounts paid to the convicted party or others be paid to the state treasury.

Article 50: If the owner of the printing press violates the provisions of Article 45 of this law, he shall be fined not less than 500 dinars and not more than 2,000 dinars. If the owner of the printing press is a legal entity, the fine shall not be less than 2,000 dinars and not more than 5,000 dinars.

Article 51: The Council of Ministers shall issue regulations to implement the provisions of this law, including those pertaining to organizing the work of printing presses, bookshops, publications houses, distribution houses, advertising agencies, study and research centers, public opinion polling centers, and translation houses, as well as the work of foreign correspondents and internal and external advertising materials, their tariffs in press and specialized publications, and the allocated percentage of space for advertisement.

Article 52: The Press and Publications Law No. 33 of 1973 and its amendments shall be canceled.

Article 53: The prime minister and the ministers shall implement the provisions of this law.

Correction to Peres Criticized, Peace Emphasized

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Peres Criticized; Peace Requirements Emphasized" published in the 18 March Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT: column one, paragraph two, second sentence make read: ...it occupied in 1967 and afterwards in... (correcting year)

Buwayz Discusses Peace Talks, Domestic Issues

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[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by MBC anchorman Antoine 'Awn in Beirut; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Awn] Your Excellency Minister Faris Buwayz, a few days ago you said that the current circumstances are critical to the resumption of the peace negotiations. The cordon states will hold a meeting in Damascus soon. What do you expect this meeting to produce?

[Buwayz] First of all I wish to state that the term cordon states is no longer realistic. We will hold a meeting of the representatives of the countries participating in the bilateral negotiations. When I say that the situation is critical, I mean it. It is critical because at the end of President Bush's term the peace negotiations stagnanted. They were expected to resume with fresh momentum at the beginning of President Clinton's term. Suddenly the Palestinian deportees issue erupted and Israel refused to implement UN Security Council Resolution 799 in its real and full form. This caused internal Arab divisions to enter into the discussions on resuming the negotiations. These divisions exist on several levels. There are two groups: One group believes that the negotiations are capable of solving the problems and it is not reasonable to stipulate that the problems be solved before resuming the negotiations. This group therefore sees the negotiations as the key to a solution. Another group believes—and it might be right—that we cannot look forward to negotiations requiring Israel to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 425 when it refuses to implement a resolution like 799.

['Awn] The summit meeting between Presidents al-Hirawi and al-Asad dealt with this issue. For the first time such a summit placed non-Lebanese issues before Lebanese issues. What unannounced results did the summit have?

[Buwayz] I believe that at such a critical time, when we were about to adopt a very important decision on whether to attend the next round of negotiations, it was natural to hold this consultation and this assessment of the regional and international situations. The meeting was important because it occurred at a very critical time. Certainly the assessment was made but an examination of more data is required before the final decision can be made. We must accurately assess possible positive developments between now and the beginning of the next round of bilateral negotiations.

['Awn] Lebanon insists that Resolution 799, calling for the deportees' return, be implemented. However, people were deported in the past. Recent reports say that Lebanon will grant citizenship to 70,000 people. If this is true, what effect will this have on Lebanon's demographic composition?

[Buwayz] Searching for solutions to past problems is the negotiators' task. However, at the time when we are actually sitting at the negotiating table, it is unreasonable of Israel to introduce new negative aspects like the recent deportation and then refuse to implement Resolution 799. Hence, we cannot view the two issues from the same perspective. As to the naturalization issue, I am really surprised at the proliferation of reports on this matter in the Lebanese media. Perhaps the Lebanese media are living up to their reputation of being imaginative. I can say that so far the issue of the Palestinian refugees has not been discussed at all—neither in the bilateral negotiations, nor at any other level. Certainly a day will come—after the peace process makes some progress and is placed on the right track—when it will be natural to discuss the right of return. As far as Lebanon is concerned, conditions in Lebanon are very critical. Lebanon is small and its social, sectarian, and ethnic balances are fragile. We can say in principle that Lebanon cannot absorb any sizable number of Palestinian refugees. First, this issue must be dealt with in the context of the right of return, a right guaranteed by the United Nations. Second, it can be handled in the context of the comprehensive solution that the negotiators are discussing. I repeat that this issue has so far not been raised nor proposed in any form to the Lebanese negotiators or the Lebanese authorities. However, imposing a requirement to absorb a number of Palestinian citizens on Lebanon will cause a major demographic imbalance which the country cannot handle. Hence the Lebanese Government refuses this in principle, regardless of circumstances.

['Awn] If a decision is made to resume peace negotiations, Lebanon is expected to be prepared this time, because the ninth round is important. Lebanese Delegation Chairman Ambassador Muhammad Suhayl Shammas asked to be relieved of his duties as chairman of the delegation, as Foreign Ministry secretary general, and as ambassador to Bonn. What are his reasons for this request and is it true that he has personal differences with you?

[Buwayz] First, I would like to say that this issue has nothing whatsoever to do with political considerations, either in connection with negotiations or any other issue. Second, I would like to say that there are no personal disputes, problems, or differences between me and the Foreign Ministry secretary general. It is simply a legal, administrative matter. The secretary general will soon reach the legal retirement age. Hence, the issue in question concerns the Foreign Ministry General Secretariat and the Lebanese Embassy in Bonn, not the peace negotiations or the chairmanship of the Lebanese delegation.

['Awn] Why did Ambassador Shammas present his request to the prime minister and not to the foreign minister as administrative regulations stipulate?

[Buwayz] I do not believe that there was a plan behind that move. To put it simply, the matter was probably

raised spontaneously, during the secretary general's visit to the Council of Ministers General Secretariat to discuss his future status.

['Awn] How would you describe your political relationship with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri?

[Buwayz] Of course, my relationship with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri is normal. Lebanon might be going through special circumstances. I mean that after al-Ta'if, Lebanon is looking for a framework for that agreement. You know that once a law is issued, a framework for enforcing that law becomes necessary. The al-Ta'if agreement still needs further interpretation, a framework, and certain norms. These things are in the making right now. Hence, the issue is sensitive. This sensitivity does not concern the prime minister or the foreign minister personally so much as it concerns the public situation. Unanticipated conditions emerge day after day. Hence, the matter requires ways to tackle the situation. This might have been behind the impression some people have.

['Awn] You have played down these differences. However, there are two things I would like to ask you about. First, why did you not accompany Prime Minister al-Hariri on his visit to Egypt? And second, there has been much talk about leaking the details of the meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, particularly in connection with Prime Minister al-Hariri's stand on Hizballah.

[Buwayz] Let us be very frank. First, you ask me why I did not accompany the prime minister to Egypt; why don't you ask me why I did not accompany the president to Senegal during the nonaligned summit? It is not necessary for the entire state to go with the president, the prime minister, or any other official on a foreign visit. Certain visits may involve the signing of agreements or a commitment between two states. Such visits should be referred to the Council of Ministers in advance. The prime minister, the foreign minister, or the concerned minister can then be commissioned by a cabinet decision to sign such agreements or commitments. The visit to Egypt was an ordinary political visit. There was no need for my presence.

['Awn] But it preceded Warren Christopher's tour of the Middle East.

[Buwayz] Of course. Many visits preceded Christopher's tour. However, that visit was certainly in response to an invitation by the Egyptian prime minister to his Lebanese counterpart. The issues involved in that visit were general ones that did not require the presence of particular ministers. Hence, the prime minister could go on his own.

['Awn] But what about the second part of the question?

[Buwayz] Naturally there are certain arrangements. I would like to point out that what has been published is extremely serious. Something in the form of minutes and a document were published. We consider it inadmissible that such documents be published. This violates the Lebanese state's credibility and the objectivity of the negotiations. I share the feelings of those who complain about such revelations.

Naturally, under a free system in Lebanon, some journalists and analysts are given briefings [preceding word in English] so that they can assess the situation accurately.

['Awn] According to Edward Djerejian, the Americans and Congress have supported the Lebanese Government's measures in the southern suburb, Hizballah's stronghold. Has this been discussed with Warren Christopher? Who raised it?

[Buwayz] The United States has praised the steps taken by government in Lebanon in terms of establishing the state's authority, disbanding the militias, and building the Army and Armed Forces. Within this framework, the United States is perhaps pursuing the issue of the complete disbanding of all militias. The United States considers the resistance to be a militia, whereas the Lebanese Government considers the resistance to be a rejection of the Israeli occupation in the south. The Lebanese state cannot give the resistance the same name it would give an ordinary internal militia.

['Awn] The papers published the following Hizballah statement two days ago: We reject addressing messages to the West at our expense. Do you believe Lebanon can disarm Hizballah and end its role militarily?

[Buwayz] Disarming Hizballah or others is not a military or security problem. Rather, it has been a political problem since the beginning. The issue has never been raised on a military or security level. On the security level, we now have an Army that has the strength to consolidate the state's authority. I believe the issue is, therefore, not being raised on this level, but on the political level. There is an Israeli occupation in the south that continues despite clear-cut UN resolutions. The Lebanese state has failed to terminate this occupation. There is a reaction in the south to the world's failure to urge Israel to implement Resolution 425. This is expressed through the confrontation of the Israeli occupation.

The Lebanese state does not have the cards that might enable it to convince the resistance and the south Lebanese people to stop the confrontation of the Israeli occupation.

['Awn] But who possesses these cards?

[Buwayz] The state might hold these cards when there are international commitments, Israeli commitments, or U.S. commitments to implement Resolution 425.

['Awn] Doesn't this affect your position in the negotiations?

[Buwayz] Perhaps this could affect our position in the negotiations. But since the current negotiations have not reached an advanced stage to make us reiterate that we are capable of regaining the south, how could we ask anyone to stop rejecting the occupation?

['Awn] Let us move on to another issue. Recently in Lebanese political life, personal sensitivities have been imposing themselves on political performance. There are differences between the president and prime minister, between the prime minister and speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, and among ministers. This kind of political performance does not help to win outside confidence or to attract aid, does it?

[Buwayz] I think that people's confidence in the world and that of states and organizations is closely linked with democratic life and practice in Lebanon. I think a democratic and free country, irrespective of the differences among its rulers, is better than an undemocratic country in which conflicts are concealed and one day suddenly erupt when no one expects them. So, whoever knows Lebanon and its nature and whoever knows the love and yearning of the Lebanese for democracy also knows that such differences are natural as long as they are on methodology. It is important for Lebanon to have one policy on basic, fateful issues. I think differences in methods among politicians exist everywhere. You will be unable to name one country in which there are no differences over the way things are run among government members or between government and parliament or among state institutions. Talk about differences in methods in Lebanon involving certain figures should be put in its proper context—in the traditional Lebanese context and in the Lebanese democratic context. I can assure you that this difference in method exists everywhere. But perhaps you do not hear about it in other countries because they have a closed system or their media are not as vocal as Lebanese media.

['Awn] What you called differences is actually disagreement over powers, duties, administrative appointments, and diplomatic appointments in your ministry...

[Buwayz, interrupting] That is not correct. I can assure you. And I mean what I say. Some newspapers level false accusations about the political situation in Lebanon. For months, I have heard there will be administrative appointments and that the appointments have already been agreed. I can assure you that the issue of appointments—at least diplomatic ones—has not been on the agenda. Perhaps we will begin discussing it. So far this issue has been on no agenda for it to become the subject of differences. It may. Let us wait until it is raised before we anticipate things. As for the other administrative issues, I again say that this country is emerging from many years of war. The situation requires appointments in every administration. The sensitivities that existed also demand that any decision made in Lebanon today gets more consideration than any decision made by a state that is completely healthy. I repeat that it is wrong to compare such problems or differences with basic and essential divisions that can negatively reflect on political life in Lebanon.

['Awn] Your government is parliamentary based. If we put aside the conditions in which the elections were held, this Chamber of Deputies is based upon a very weak popular representation. First, how does your government regard Lebanese public opinion? Second, you have repeatedly called on Lebanese living abroad to return and help in the reconstruction process. There are security incidents, the last of which was the clash between Hizballah and the Amal Movement in the southern suburb. As for freedoms, some people believe that the freedom of union activities and strikes is endangered, especially when you consider that shots were fired during an armed demonstration in the southern suburb demanding the trial of Salman Rushdie. How do you view these contradictions?

[Buwayz] I feel that what Lebanon is being asked to do is to disregard the Swiss and British democracies. It is as if this country is always being asked to achieve heroism in the sphere of democracy and make achievements without its conditions being considered. You say there are security incidents. I say responsibly that the security situation in Lebanon compares with that in the calmest cities. I say that statistics for last year or for the past few months will show that security in Lebanon on every level is better than that in around 60 percent of world capitals. The best evidence of this are the events in the southern suburb. True, there was an incident. But what was the outcome? All those who were involved were handed over to the Army and detained. This is evidence that a simple incident in which no one was killed or injured ended with the handing over of all those involved to the competent Lebanese authorities. This shows the effectiveness of security, not the opposite.

On the labor unions: As far as I know, there is no suppression of unions or a situation in which the unions are forced to stop their activities. There are judicial investigations. Whether they are justified is another matter. But investigations are being conducted according to the rules and to democratic laws that are very flexible.

['Awn] Some of those who took part in the al-Ta'if Accord say there is now an imbalance in its implementation and interpretation. More seriously, the constitutional framework for resolving differences does not exist in the al-Ta'if Accord, apart from the solutions that Damascus sometimes imposes. There is no constitutional framework for interpreting any mistake. Each one interprets it according to his own whims. What do you think?

[Buwayz] I have already said that when a simple, routine law is enacted, lawyers and judges go through a phase of defining the framework, the implementation, the norms, and interpretations of the law. Today the issue is the Constitution, a complete constitution, not a law.

['Awn] Your adversaries regard your kinship with the president as a major factor in your appointment as foreign minister. Are you irritated by such talk?

[Buwayz] There is no problem. Kinship is better than enmity.

['Awn] How do you reply to those who say your keeping this post is also due to the president?

[Buwayz] Credit is due to the president for many things that have happened in the country. If this is part of the credit, it is one of the president's services to the country.

['Awn] Minister Faris Buwayz, thank you.

[Buwayz] Thank you.

U.S. Efforts on Talks Sought

NC1803125393 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The meeting between Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has ended. The latter said after the meeting that they discussed current domestic and international affairs, especially in light of the coming round of peace negotiations.

Buwayz announced that the Vatican's foreign affairs official is expected to visit Lebanon in the coming few days. The Congo's foreign minister also is expected to visit Lebanon.

Buwayz said a meeting will be held in Damascus among the Arab countries taking part in the bilateral talks. This topic was discussed with Speaker Birri, he said.

Asked whether there are any new developments regarding contacts with Arab countries about the talks, Buwayz said there are extensive contacts and that the situation is being finalized. The situation depends on a number of considerations regarding the implementation of Resolution 799.

On new developments regarding Resolution 799, he said there are efforts from various international parties to urge Israel to implement this resolution seriously within a reasonable period. He said he hopes the United States will exert efforts to resume the peace talks.

Al-Hariri Says U.S. Policy Based on 'Manipulation'

NC1903143693 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has said Arab aid to Lebanon will be forthcoming and the $10 billion included in his economic and reconstruction plan will arrive.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-SHA'B published today, he announced: I remain committed to my statement and my promise that the aid is coming.

He added: I have not asked for the $10 billion in order to spend the money so we can sit back, feel smug, applaud to see the funds putting reconstruction into operation, and then have the whole process stop without having made the promised investments. I do not want to spend a single cent unprofitably. Lebanon will become better than ever. What is important is not to spend the money but to improve expenditure according to a well-studied, practical, and collective plan. We will seek to teach skills to the entire nation and in all areas.

Al-Hariri said current conditions are painful as a result of unconscientious behavior and widespread corruption, declaring: Management has taken to accepting commissions, theft, and bribery to an unbelievable extent. There is loose conduct everywhere. Such conditions require strict control. Everyone who appropriates public funds must be taken to task.

He added: Management must be purged from the inside by choosing competent and honest people who respect their country and do not profit from the citizens' needs.

Al-Hariri said the telephones crisis will end very soon and that the deal made by Minister Ghaziri to provide telephones to everyone is 50 percent less expensive than previous deals. He said: We want to provide telephone services everywhere in the Republic.

Al-Hariri referred to the conspicuous U.S. bias towards Israel, saying that the United States alleges that its determination to maintain Israel's technological and military superiority is only a guarantee to Tel Aviv that the peace process will continue and in order to allay its fears.

Al-Hariri remarked, however, that Washington's policy is based on manipulation and trickery and that it is laughing at Arabs and Jews alike. He said it takes only its own strategic interests into account and takes no heed of anyone except in connection with those interests.

Al-Hariri Outlines State Priorities

NC1803213393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1726 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Speech by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri at a Ramadan dinner hosted by the Islamic al-Maqasid Society alumni, at the Bristol Hotel in Beirut—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Gentlemen, the al-Maqasid Society alumni have always been concerned about the national issue. This was manifested in their statements on cultural programs. Therefore, I want to take this opportunity to talk to you about our national aspirations and the tasks we are undertaking in this transitional stage of Lebanon's life. The foremost of these tasks is the issue of rebuilding the state, in terms of its foundation, construction, and development, and whatever political and national conditions this demands. The least of these conditions is defending the process of national accord and achieving comprehensive reconciliation. Reconciliation cannot be achieved at the expense of the state nor at the expense of the state's sovereignty and independence.

We have moved from war to peace and made big strides towards restoring respect to the institutions of peace. It is not acceptable to undermine this great achievement or expose our national security to renewed setbacks. There

will be no going back, whatever the justifications may be. We have made a big stride on the way to peace. Any attempt to take us back will be resisted to protect the future of our country and the future generations that have wagered on the revival of Lebanon, starting from its capital, Beirut.

Brothers, the al-Ta'if agreement took the country out of the abyss of sectarian conflict to a broad political horizon. We have daily proof that this political settlement dispels delusions and hatred. It enabled the citizens to return to normal life and coexist in a national, democratic atmosphere. [passage omitted]

I emphasize again to you that Lebanon will only be governed by consensus. No individual, party, or sect can claim the ability to disregard others. Any sect, group, or party which isolates itself and refrains from participating in building the state will drown in a whirlpool of military and political conflicts with others and within itself. Recent experiences are the best or perhaps the worst evidence. Isolation produces (?violence). The time has come for the Lebanese to refrain from doing anything beyond their capabilities and to recognize that their openness to each other and their positive and responsible participation in building the state are the real guarantees for their creative democratic life.

National and social stability is a major national issue that must not be tampered with from inside or outside. Realizing the responsibility of the state to achieve reconciliation, I have pursued the course of reconciliation with all the groups, considering that dialogue, consultation, and discussion of minor and major issues is the minimum requirement for the spirit of reconciliation that characterizes our country and our political society. The government's efforts to return the displaced people to their land and homes are part of this reconciliation approach. The displaced people are the open wound caused by the war which must be treated and healed. [passage omitted]

I said that the state officials bear responsibility for the reconstruction process. But nongovernment establishments and institutions, the labor unions, and the political parties are the forces that constitute the civilian and political society that is being created now. Doors must be open between them and the state in the processes of building the political community and reconstruction.

Brothers, we have laid down a number of objectives that are all related to the rebuilding of the state, including financial and economic stability and the reconstruction of the administrative structure, on bases that are in line with the requirements of the era. It is a strenuous and difficult task which we have embraced with full determination so that the state's credibility in the eyes of society can be restored. This is the course we have opted for, the course of the state that is indispensable and for which there is no alternative. It is the course that will inevitably lead us to the liberation of the south and western al-Biqa' from Israeli occupation. It is the course that protects our national unity and restores to us part of the place we deserve to occupy in the region and the world. All these objectives cannot be achieved without the Lebanese people's unity and solidarity.

Brothers, I mentioned reconstruction as one of the objectives connected with the rebuilding of the state because the state cannot make progress without reconstruction. You know that our state, which is emerging from a long war, has meager resources and needs the efforts of all Lebanese as well as the assistance of brothers and friends. But there will be no aid from a brother or friend in the absence of confidence in ourselves, our future, and our state. We will soon translate this confidence into an integrated plan for economic revival that goes beyond repairing, to growth, and will involve all society's vital sectors. [passage omitted]

Brothers, I have repeatedly emphasized that a state governed by law is the support for public freedoms and the key to peace, reconstruction, and development. This state is built on two interrelated bases: security and justice. While having paid special attention to security affairs, because they concern the people's safety and comfort, we are also paying similar attention to the judiciary. [applause] It is one of the three powers stipulated in the constitution. Once its work becomes organized, then everybody, both officials and citizens, will be subjected to the supremacy of law, and the basic rights of the Lebanese as stipulated in the constitution will be guaranteed. Hence, we were eager to speed up the establishment of the Constitutional Council, which the government will soon refer to the Chamber of Deputies, following an exhaustive study conducted by concerned parties to ensure that it will fulfill the Lebanese people's ambitions and be compatible with the constitution and the principle of separation of powers. [passage omitted]

Discusses Development Plan

NC1803152693 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The Cabinet spent six hours discussing economic development and the reconstruction plan yesterday. Some ministers opposed the role of the Development and Reconstruction Board, charging that its powers overlap those of the services ministries.

The 10-year plan envisaged for 1993-2002 will cost approximately $10 billion. Various quarters will discuss the plan before it is submitted to the Cabinet.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-NAHAR, Prime Minister al-Hariri stated that the Lebanon of the year 2000 will be a Lebanon of equality, development, and prosperity for all. He said the dream might seem farfetched, but we are gambling on the Lebanese people's willpower, which aspires to achieving this dream. We will adopt a policy of a long-term comprehensive and balanced development, eschewing narrow-minded ideas and daily trivia. He said the plan concerns every individual and area and is not the monopoly of one party; it

belongs to all Lebanese. It is open for discussion by political, economic, and popular quarters, as well as the media. The Cabinet will discuss all views and remarks on the plan to strengthen ideas and make them better suited to the Lebanon of the year 2000, something we all want.

Al-Hariri Meets With Irish Defense Minister

NC1903133193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Irish Defense Minister David Andrews met with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri at 1000 today. After the meeting, Andrews said the talks focused on a number of bilateral issues and the friendly relations between Ireland and Lebanon, which have similar problems, such as lack of sovereignty and chaos, whether in southern Lebanon or northern Ireland.

Andrews said the peace process, which everyone hopes will succeed, must resume within the framework of the peace talks. If this is not done, the illegitimate and Israeli-backed South Lebanese Army [SLA] and other organizations will continue to exist.

Andrews added that he explained to Prime Minister al-Hariri the important role that the Irish contingent of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] has been playing since 1978.

Andrews noted that the meeting with Prime Minister al-Hariri was positive. Several topics were discussed, including the efforts to rebuild Lebanon and the 10-year development plan which al-Hariri explained. He stressed that Ireland has the means to help in the rebuilding of Lebanon's infrastructure and the requirements of the coming phase of peace in Lebanon.

Nasrallah Urges Christians To Join Islamic Resistance

NC1903103193 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 10 Mar 93 p 16

[Text] The Committee for Supporting Islamic Resistance held an iftar [breaking the fast] banquet yesterday evening at the Great Exhibitions Hall in the new al-Rawshah markets attended by a large number of deputies, personalities, and hundreds of others.

Hizballah Secretary General al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah and 'Allamah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah each delivered important speeches outlining the stands of the resistance on current events. Nasrallah's speech concentrated on the nature of the resistance, its destiny, and Hizballah's stance on the regime. The highlight of his speech was a call to Christian brothers to join the resistance. If the name Islamic resistance is a psychological barrier to some, Nasrallah said, then we are ready to meet the national resistance and any other parties that want to participate in the activities of the resistance but object to its name. We can then discuss changing the name of the resistance if that poses an obstacle. If there is someone who wishes to join the resistance, but has logistical problems, such as lack of ammunition or potential, then we are willing to place our capabilities at their disposal. He said: The Islamic resistance does not wage its battles to attain specific positions of authority, only to abandon its objectives as soon as that specific position is attained. We do not fight to share the booty and profit of the regime. We are opposed to distributing shares. We support a homeland where everyone is equal. We attack those who interfere and exploit security incidents to fan the fire of sedition.

Fadlallah attacked the international media war against the Arabs and the Muslims as a result of the World Trade Center explosion in New York. He reminded the United States that it was behind the Bi'r al-'Abd explosion [1985 car bombing in Beirut's southern suburb] which killed over 70 people, including women, children, and elderly. This was admitted by its chief of intelligence in his autobiography. The United States practices official terrorism and blows up cars to kill civilians. It has no right to restrict the use of the label terrorist to those who booby-trap cars in Lebanon, especially since those the United States accuses do not blow up cars to kill civilians, unlike United States and Israel.

Fadlallah said that the U.S. objective for the Gulf war was not to liberate Kuwait nor to kill Saddam. It wanted to annihilate Iraq and the Iraqi people. The proof of this is that when the uprising against Saddam started after retrieving Kuwait, the alliance forces intervened indirectly to prevent the annihilation of Saddam.

Urges All-Out Resistance

NC1903102493 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah has stressed that Islamic resistance has proven the sincerity of its objectives through blood and sacrifices, not through intellectual debates and political negotiations. It is natural, therefore, to see all this rallying around the resistance, which has earnestly imposed itself thanks to the virtuous blood of martyrs, he said.

At a breaking the fast banquet held by the Committee for Supporting Islamic Resistance in Ba'labakk yesterday evening, his eminence said: Those whose lands are occupied should resist using guns; if they cannot, they can use stones and knives, or at least they can shout against the occupation.

He said slogans of human values are nothing but a cover for the arrogant forces to practice their hegemony and influence. He maintained that Israel would not have come into existence had the arrogant forces not supported it and launched war against the nation. We need to stick to the option of resistance more than ever, because there are many indications that our Arab and Islamic world faces great peril, he said.

Noting that the new U.S. Administration has expressed strong political, military, economic, and financial support

for Israel, Nasrallah said this rebuts claims that the need for the Zionist enemy ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. He stressed that the United States and the West are committed to supporting the Zionist enemy, noting that the question of the Palestinian deportees has almost been forgotten amid the latest developments and the Israeli escalation, to which many are turning a blind eye.

The Hizballah secretary general asked: What are we expecting from negotiations sponsored by an adversary and an enemy in the full sense of the words? The Zionist enemy received full support from the U.S. Administration, he noted. Had it not been for resistance, he said, we would have felt ashamed before all world nations. He explained that resistance is this people's genuine characteristic, and it means might, pride, and protection of the land. He said resistance today represents both an offensive value for liberation, and a defensive value for fortification. Nasrallah added:

[Begin Nasrallah recording] Resistance men today are sacrificing themselves and their blood so that the entire nation can live peacefully and safely. They give everything they have so that you can keep everything you have. They abandoned their calm, easy lives and chose to live in the cold of mountains and valleys and to experience hunger and thirst so as to create a dignified and safe life for this nation. They need your support, nourishment, and steadfastness. You, our dear kinsfolk in al-Biqa', have proven since the early days that this resistance is deep-rooted in your consciences. [end recording]

Nasrallah said al-Biqa' has served as an example of how youths leave their safe villages for the fields of resistance to defend the south, western al-Biqa', and Muslim boundaries. Here, he said, one feels the unity of the homeland, the unity of the cause, and the unity of the objectives. In this respect, al-Sayyid Nasrallah said:

[Begin Nasrallah recording] We emphasize that all our people need to respect this sacred, divine, and human duty so everyone can carry out resistance. Everyone should shoulder the responsibilities of defense, liberation, and confrontation. We want resistance to expand further and further. We do not invoke people with words, but with blood and martyrdom—the blood of [former Hizballah leaders] al-Sayyid Raghib Harb and al-Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, the blood of [name indistinct] and Imam al-Husayn. Through this blood, [words indistinct] everyone to feel the real danger and prepare to confront it. We are not resisting out of lust for fighting and resistance, nor out of greed for any of the things of this transient life. We are resisting because we have found that this is the only way for the nation, the homeland, and man to survive against the occupation, demolition, and destruction being planned by the Americans through Israel. [end recording]

Hizballah Deputy Terms Regime Oppressive, Dictatorial

NC1903090893 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] [Hizballah] Deputy al-Sayyid Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, head of the Loyalty for Resistance parliamentary bloc, attended a banquet in Beirut to break the fast, which was held by the committee of support for Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified. Al-Sayyid said at the banquet that the Lebanese are a people without a state, and that Lebanon is a government without a people. Lebanon may even become a country without a people or government, he warned. We are not oppositionists, but advocates of radical changes in the system, he said.

Deputy al-Sayyid criticized the government's position toward the resistance, saying the relationship between the government and resistance is similar to that between the resistance and any humanitarian establishment. It is as though the government is unconcerned with what is happening, he said. He warned against schemes being hatched for the region by arrogant forces, notably the settlement scheme. He linked the immense budget approved yesterday with plans for liquidation.

Discussing government appointments and intragovernment differences, Deputy al-Sayyid said the principles of competence and qualifications have not been considered in making the appointments. They were approved on the bases of favoritism and clique affiliation, he said, describing the regime as oppressive, dictatorial, and a confiscator of people's freedoms and skills. He said: Under the shadow of a sectarian system, do not search for opposition: The share-distribution system is agreed upon; oppression may not use force, but it can be practiced by buying junior and senior officials.

Lahd Says Syria, Iran Continue To Encourage Hizballah

TA1803132993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Excerpt] General Antoine Lahd, the commander of the SLA [South Lebanese Army], has said that Syria and Iran are encouraging Hizballah to continue its activities. Gen. Lahd was speaking at the graduation ceremony for SLA company commanders in south Lebanon. Our correspondent in the north Yo'av Aviv reports:

SLA Commander Antoine Lahd said today that the scope of organized Palestinian terrorist activity in south Lebanon is still limited and does not necessitate special operational deployment by the SLA. He asserted that despite the calm of the past few days, the Syrians and the Iranians are still encouraging Hizballah to act. [passage omitted]

Two Explosions Destroy Pro-'Arafat Officials' Cars

NC1903135293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Two explosions within a five-minute interval destroyed two Mercedes belonging to pro-'Arafat Fatah officials. The first explosion, which occurred in Hay al-Raml in Tyre, destroyed Fatah officer Ibrahim Ahmad al-Haj's car. The second targeted Isma'il Abu-al-'Aynayn's car in Jall al-Bahr Camp.

The explosions are part of the conflict between the pro-'Arafat Fatah and Fatah-the Revolutionary Council [FRC]. An FRC official was killed several days ago in al-Burj al-Shimali.

Defense Minister Denies Army To Expand Deployment

NC1803150593 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul denied that the Army Command intends to expand the Army deployment in the north or any other area, at least for the present time, because the Army is present in the north and there are no problems at present.. He said from time to time the Army will implement a security plan or a high-security day to be carried out by the Army Command in each area where there is a security threat.

Israeli Artillery Shells Road in South

NC1903112493 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Reports from the south indicate that the Zionist enemy directed artillery fire at the road leading to Luwayzah and Jabal-al-Rayhan from its positions in al-Zaffatah and al-'Ayshiyah bushes just after 1800 yesterday.

Commentary Discusses al-Asad Speech, Praises Unity

JN1803183893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1245 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: In his important pan-Arab speech to scholars and men of religion yesterday, President Hafiz al-Asad stressed the importance of our national unity. This unity constitutes a wealth, a treasure, a weapon, and a means. Thanks to our national unity, Syria has managed to confront all challenges, raise its voice, impose its will, and safeguard the rights of the Arabs and Muslims. By virtue of our national unity, Syria has also managed to stand fast in the face of all conspiracies targeting it, in its capacity as the nation's vigilant conscience and the forward trench designed to defend the nation's interests and rights. Thanks to our national unity, Syria has managed to overcome difficulties, remove obstacles, and build a military and economic power for all Arabs.

Our national unity has been splendidly obvious in the constitutional institutions and in the popular organizations which the Corrective Movement has established, including the National Progressive Front; the various organizations, bodies, and trade unions; the People's Assembly; the political and economic pleuralism; and the community's participation in building the homeland's pan-Arab, social, and economic march.

While numerous countries were stumbling over domestic crises and terrible conflicts, Syria was enjoying security and tranquillity under both a firmly established national unity and a wise leadership that paid much attention to national unity and to the means of its continued consolidation. It is sufficient for us to look around at countries both near and far to sense the greatness of the achievements which have been realized, thanks to leader al-Asad's care, concern, and wisdom. Syria is an oasis for security and stability, and its people are in fact one hand and one voice. Syria's attention is focused on both construction and extension of assistance to the brothers, without selling out the slightest amount of dignity or rights and without being mortgaged to anyone.

As President Hafiz al-Asad earnestly said, Syria is today waging its most difficult battle, the battle of peace. There is despotic and arrogant Israel which talks peace and wages war, and deceives the world public opinion. There are also the protectors of Israel who advocate a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis while turning a blind eye to Israel's criminal conduct, continuing to supply it with funds and arms, and pledging to achieve Israel's military superiority over all Arabs. There are also the European states which say that they support right and justice while failing to exert any efforts which may rise up to the level of right and justice. Moreover, there is the United Nations which is working to quickly contain some crises while providing to the big powers, which have influence on the Security Council, pretexts for interference at a time when it works very slowly or not at all if the matter concerns both the Arab cause and our kinfolk's suffering in the occupied Arab territories.

Syria had to confront these pressures and overcome all these challenges [word indistinct] to [?raise] the nation's voice and will and to reject the sellout of even an inch of the homeland's soil or its rights. Syria also had to foil the games, tricks, and traps, and it so did with great competence. Syria also prompted those who talk peace to acknowledge two essential facts: There should be a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Security Council resolutions should be the basis for such a settlement.

Syria firmly and resolutely reiterated its stands to former U.S. Secretary of State Baker and to current Secretary Christopher. It also reiterated these stands to President George Bush when President Hafiz al-Asad met with him in Geneva. In the Washington peace talks, Syria confronted Israel and its games and tricks, and worked for the realization of a unified Arab stand, so there will be no bargaining on any right or sellout of an inch of land. Peace can either be an honorable and just peace that will regain all the occupied Arab territories, without exception, and secure the Palestinians' sacred national rights, or it cannot come into existence at all.

While, as President Hafiz al-Asad earnestly pointed out, Syria waged war alone and frequently insisted on confronting the Israeli and Western pressures alone—and it actually faced the huge fleets in Lebanon alone—it has not engaged alone, nor will it engage alone, in the peace process. This is because peace is the cause of all Arabs, and the solution Syria wants is a just and comprehensive solution on all fronts—a solution that will return Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories to the Palestinians; southern Lebanon to the Lebanese people; and the Golan to the Syrians.

Syria will not bargain about the occupied Arab territories, nor will it barter the entire Golan for Jerusalem or any other Arab territory. Peace should be an Arab peace which all the Arabs will accept. From this premise, Syria defended the Palestinian deportee issue and sought a solution to this problem in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799.

Syria, which laid down a firm national unity, considered this unity as a basis to realize pan-Arab unity and achieve the nation's sublime objectives. Syria is true to its pledge under President Hafiz al-Asad, who has been, and continues to be, the Arabs' vigilant conscience and their never-sleeping eye.

Afghanistan

Hekmatyar Urges Parties To Waive Rivalry Over Ministries

LD1803180293 London BBC World Service in Persian 1615 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] In Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan, the Afghan mojahedin leaders are studying ways to form a cabinet. Golboddin Hekmatyar who was appointed as prime minister following the peace agreement held in Islamabad, Pakistan, says that the members of the new cabinet can be decided by the deadline on Sunday. Hekmatyar has said that seven out of nine main mojahedin groups are represented in the talks either by their leaders or by the representatives of their leaders. In another development it has been reported that the representatives of two other groups, that is Ayatollah Mohseni, leader of Harakat-e Eslami [Islamic Movement] and Mawlawi Yunes Khales will also send representatives to these talks.

Mr. Hekmatyar today from the governor's palace in Jalalabad said the following about these developments to our colleague Mirwais Jalil:

[Begin Hekmatayr recording in Dari] Thanks to God, our negotiations are continuing successfully in a climate of fraternity and I am hopeful for positive results from these talks. I am sure that if we proceed as such we will be able to form the cabinet soon. Today we agreed that each group should introduce five persons for each ministry. Therefore, if two ministries are to be allocated to each group, then they should introduce 10 people for the cabinet so that competent and [word indistinct] are appointed. This shows that all the parties favor an urgent end to war and the establishment of peace, and that they want to reach an agreement on forming an interim government as soon as possible. Therefore, we must open the path for elections to form a legislative council. [end recording]

One of the main points in forming cabinet is the fate of the Ministry of Defense, which is held at the moment by Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, a commander of Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society] and one of Hekmatyar's old rivals. Hekmatyar said it will be against the spirit of the Islamabad peace accord if Jami'at-e Eslami holds two posts in the state and in the government. One of the them should be given up: either Ahmad Shah Mas'ud shoul give up the Defense Ministry or President Rabbani the Presidency. Hekmatyar expressed hope that mojahedin groups should have more important purposes, that is to end war:

[Begin Hekmatyar recording] I should say that the Defense Ministry is a part of the cabinet. Just as the problem of the other ministries will be solved based on the Islamabad peace accord, so the problem of the Defense Ministry will solved too. We should not make the issue of a ministry a subject of disagreement. We should consider the main issues of the country. The main issue is that the war should end. We have asked all parties, in connection with the formation of the interim government, not to insist too much on what ministry should be given to which group and what number of ministries should be allocated to which group. I have also asked the more powerful and larger groups who think that they deserve better and that more posts should be given to them, that they too should accept the fact that, for the time being the interim government is formed based on equality and all the parties should have an equal presence in this cabinet. So that the government should not have any opposition, there should not be any opposite group and it should be acceptable to all the parties. Then elections can be held under the supervision of such a cabinet. I think all the groups agree with this. I hope none of the groups will discuss the issue of a ministry or the number of the ministries as an issue and that they will avoid this and not prevent the implementation of the accord. [end recording]

* Leaders Prepare for New Political Situation

93AS0625A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Mar 93 pp 1, 4

[Article by Jamal Isma'il and Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan in Islamabad and 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah: "Afghan Leaders Conclude Accord To End Fighting and Share Power"]

[Excerpts] Yesterday afternoon, Afghan mojahedin leaders concluded a peace accord that they completed at dawn after a meeting that lasted all night (Saturday-Sunday) and that was held under the auspices of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; Prince Turki al-Faysal, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz's envoy; and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ala'eddin Borujerdi.

The latest meeting was held even though observers had expected two days ago that the Islamabad talks would culminate in failure after President Borhanoddin Rabbani had rejected the opposition demand that the Rabbani-led Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society] stop holding the positions of president of the republic and of defense minister simultaneously, i.e. the demand that Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, Jami'at-e Eslami's main military figure, be removed.

Afghan sources have reported that Mas'ud has begun to reinforce his forces in Panjshir, his original position during the days of jihad against Soviet occupation. Observers expect that he will launch guerrilla warfare against a new government.

It is to be noted that Yunas Qanuni, a Defense Ministry spokesman and a close associate of Mas'ud, took part in the Islamabad meetings but did not attend the accord signing ceremony, thus expressing his opposition to it. [passage omitted]

Hezb-e Eslami sources have assured AL-HAYAH that Hekmatyar started the task of forming the new cabinet yesterday evening. The sources said that Hekmatyar will return to Afghanistan to continue his efforts and that he

will not visit Saudi Arabia to meet with King Fahd and Saudi officials until he completes this task.

AL-HAYAH attended the accord signing ceremony at the residence of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The signing was delayed for more than an hour. At 0220 local time, Afghan leaders emerged from the meetings hall and sat at the table set up for signing the accord. Whereas Rabbani and Ahmad Shah, Rabbani's ally and internal affairs minister, looked glum, Hekmatyar seemed pleased and he welcomed the press and the guests. Some leaders did not hide their satisfaction, while others looked angry. Ayatollah Asef Mohseni, the leader of Harakat-e Eslami, refused to sign the English copy of the accord and delayed signing until a Farsi copy was produced. After the signing ceremony, which lasted nearly 15 minutes, the Afghan leaders rose to leave the hall and hold a press conference. [passage omitted]

* Factions Threaten To Resume Fighting

93AS0607B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
5 Mar 93 pp 1,4

[Article by Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan and Jamal Isma'il: "Disagreements Over Powers Threaten Afghan Talks; Factions Make Threat of War"]

[Text] Islamabad—Despite yesterday morning's announcement by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that the two main Afghan parties, namely President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] Leader Golboddin Hekmatyar, Rabbani's adversary, have agreed on a peaceful solution, the signs of serious disagreements between the two men surfaced yesterday evening, threatening to torpedo the talks in their entirety. These disagreements center on each of the two men's future powers.

Moreover, two major opposition parties, namely the Uzbek militias and the pro-Tehran Shiite Unity Party, have rejected in principle the Afghan president's continued presence in his position for more than six months, even though Hekmatyar has agreed to such continued presence. The militias have threatened to resort to force to oust the president.

A Saudi source familiar with the course of the talks has told AL-HAYAH that until a late hour yesterday night, each party clung to its visions of peace in Kabul. The source pointed out that the fundamental disagreement centers on the powers of each of Rabbani and Hekmatyar, who is expected to be assigned prime minister if agreement is reached.

Regarding solutions, the sources said that the two sides have agreed to form a joint committee that will submit proposals to be considered in connection with a future cabinet makeup. But they have disagreed on the makeup of this committee.

The talks in Islamabad will be suspended today, and Hekmatyar will leave for Peshawar. From there, he may return to the Pakistani capital or may go on to Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Rabbani is expected to go to Kabul to consult with Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, his defense minister, and Abdol Rasul Sayyaf, leader of the Ettehad-e Eslami.

The Saudi source said that if the parties develop an agreement and sign it in Islamabad, they will go to the honorable Mecca to announce it.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, Nasim Mahdi, the militias' deputy leader, said: "We will not agree to keeping Rabbani as president for more than six months. We will make our decision in a way compatible with the nation's and the people's interest." He kept the door open to opposition by peaceful means or by force.

Sharif announced that Rabbani and Hekmatyar had agreed on most of the points of the peace plan he had submitted to them. AL-HAYAH has acquired a copy of this plan, which calls for forming a provisional government for an 18-month period during which Rabbani retains his position while the position of prime minister is assigned to Hekmatyar or to an individual representing him.

The plan proposes that the cabinet be formed through mutual consultation between the two sides and with the approval of the other parties. It also calls for holding general elections in the country within a period of no more than 18 months and for assigning an independent committee to form a provisional parliament for a term ranging from six to eight months to draft a new constitution for the country.

Professor Khurshid Ahmed, deputy chairman of Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami—whose chairman, Qazi Hussein Ahmed, has mediated between the two feuding sides—has drafted the proposed constitution in five pages. AL-HAYAH has perused a copy of this draft.

The peace plan also proposes forming a defense council. Thus, the current defense minister will lose his position. Well-known field commanders are to participate in the council, and their task will be to form a national army and to gather heavy weapons within the environs of the capital. Both sides have displayed flexibility toward the plan. But they continue to examine its details.

Hekmatyar met yesterday with leaders of the five parties that have joined the opposition with his party, namely: former Provisional President Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, Ahmad Gaylani, Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, Ayatollah Asef Mohseni, and Abdol Karim Khalili, the Unity Party representative. He consulted with them on the peace plan so they wouldn't feel abandoned now that he has moved close to peace with Rabbani.

Three major parties have expressed their pessimism over this settlement. An official spokesman of the Yunes Khales wing of Hezb-e Eslami has stated that his party will not take part in these negotiations because Uzbek militia representatives have been invited to take part in them. It is well known that the militias' delegation isn't

taking part in these talks but is acquainted with the course of the negotiations. Khales denied the Pakistani Foreign Ministry official spokesman's statement that he hasn't participated in the negotiations because Shi'ite parties have taken part in them.

The Unity Party, which is led by Abdol Ali Mazari and which is considered the second biggest opposition party after the Hezb-e Eslami, has announced its rejection of Rabbani's presidency in principle, in addition to its rejection of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud as defense minister. Meanwhile, the Uzbek militias, led by General Abdol Rashid Dostam, have insisted on equal participation in the government by all parties. In an interview with AL-HAYAH, (Diya' Juzjani), a member of the militia delegation, has said that the party he represents insists on the principle of equality among mujahidun parties. He added that the militias, which control a number of northern provinces, have proposed introducing some modifications to the Pakistani peace plan. But he has given no details.

Reliable sources have expressed to AL-HAYAH their fears that the militias will explode the situation in case they are excluded from the settlement. They noted that General Hamid Gul, former director of the Pakistani military intelligence who is the cease-fire observer, telephoned Pakistani commanders two days ago to warn them of such an explosion. Afghan sources in Islamabad have pointed out that Mas'ud is not pleased with the course of the negotiations, especially since he has become certain of losing his position if a defense council is formed. Afghan sources have expressed fear that a split could develop within the Islamic Society between a faction supporting President Rabbani and one supporting the defense minister.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, official sources of the Jabha-e Nejat-e Melli National Liberation Front], led by Mojaddedi, have rejected the plan, have noted that they support the initial plan, which keeps Rabbani as president for just four more months and divides sensitive positions among all organizations, and have expressed the belief that "no organization is entitled to hold two positions simultaneously."

Najibullah Said Afflicted by Kidney Ailment

BK1803163493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1627 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Jalalabad, Afghanistan, March 18 (AFP)—Former Afghan president Najibollah, is suffering from a serious kidney ailment but is being treated in the U.N. compound in Kabul where he has been holed up since his ouster last year, a mojahedin official said here Thursday.

"Najibullah has stones in both kidneys," said Nawab Salim, a top aide to Prime Minister-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar, adding that the ex-president was receiving treatment at his Kabul refuge in a United Nations building where he has been living since the mojahedin took control of Kabul last year.

Salim said medicines prescribed for Najibollah by Pakistani doctors were sent to Kabul from Islamabad.

He said the fate of Najibollah would be decided by the new cabinet to be inducted under the peace accord signed March 7 in Islamabad by eight Afghan factions.

Najibollah has been in telephone contact with his family in New Delhi, Salim said.

The 46-year-old former chief of the Afghan secret police was stopped from fleeing Kabul just after the mojahedin entered the capital.

Najibollah became president in 1986 during the military occupation of Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union.

He replaced Babrak Karmal, who is believed to be living now in northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, a stronghold of Uzbek militia general Abdul Rashid Dostam.

* Jamaat Leader Comments on Mediation

93AS0607A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Mar 93 p 4

[Article by Jamal Isma'il: "Jamaat-i-Islami Leader to AL-HAYAH: Islamabad Has Not Realized Hekmatyar's Importance; Accuses International Parties of Trying to Ignite War in Afghanistan"]

[Text] Islamabad—Qazi Hussein Ahmed, leader of Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami, has asserted that the two parties to the conflict in Kabul (the opposition and the government) have asked him to mediate to bring about peace. In an interview with AL-HAYAH, he held the Pakistani Government responsible for the failure to settle the crisis because of "this government's failure to comprehend Hezb-e Eslami's [Islamic Party] position and importance in the arena."

He has warned that some countries concerned with the Afghan issue try to involve organizations in the political settlement that have no influential role in Afghanistan's jihad, "some of whom even lined up with the Communists." This is a reference to the Uzbek militias. Hussein has also denounced Islamabad's official hosting of a delegation of these militias, led by Abdol Rashid Dostam, a former Communist general.

He has accused unnamed international and regional parties of igniting the fire of sedition in Afghanistan, adding that these parties have capabilities on the ground and resort to shelling both sides' positions in order to ignite war between them.

Hussein added: "Shaykh Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi (leader of the Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolution Movement]) has asked me to mediate between Hezb-e Eslami Leader Golboddin Hekmatyar and (President) Borhanoddin Rabbani. He told me that if I manage to settle the dispute between the two men, then the solution will be imposed on the other organizations easily." He expressed the belief that Hezb-e Eslami and

the Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society] (which is led by Rabbani) are the two biggest and most widespread Afghan organizations.

Hussein added that the Pakistani Government made a mistake last April when it treated Hezb-e Eslami like the other smaller Afghan organizations. But "it seems that our brothers in the government have realized their mistake and have understood that there is no place for neglecting or belittling this party in any formula developed for a solution in Afghanistan."

He criticized the Pakistani Government's position, which was reflected in the statements made by the Pakistani Foreign Ministry's under secretary last Monday evening. The under secretary said that the mediation efforts of Qazi Ahmed Hussein and General Hamid Gul, former director of military intelligence, have failed to put an end to the fighting. Hussein added: "We see that we have made some progress. The efforts go on. The governments that seek to involve organizations that contributed nothing during the jihad years and that stood in the communist regime's line—these governments are trying to sabotage the reconciliation efforts." However, he refused to name any particular government, even though he has denounced the Pakistani Government's hosting of a delegation of militias and its receiving Dostam in Islamabad several times earlier.

The leader of Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami expressed optimism on the possibility of developing a lasting solution to the conflicts and of forming a strong government in Afghanistan. He said: "If we had no hope, we would not have gone to Kabul. The situation is better today than when we went there."

As for the demands for forming a plenary government in Afghanistan, Hussein said: "External forces that insist on this demand want to introduce the communists, who have been given general amnesty by the government, through this door."

Rabbani's Representatives Leave for Jalalabad Meeting

LD1803173993 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Representatives of Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, left today for Jalalabad to participate in a session of the leaders of jihadi groups. The press office of the Presidency of the Islamic State of Afghanistan said to Bakhtar Information Agency that the delegation comprises Esteemed Sayed Nurollah Emad and Esteemed Engineer Mohammad Eshaq. The session is due to discuss the formation of a new cabinet based on the Islamabad peace accord.

According to another report Esteemed Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmadzay, deputy prime minister, also left for Jalalabad today as the representative of Esteemed Professor 'Abdol Rab Rasul Sayyaf, leader of Ettehad-e Eslami [Islamic Union].

The leaders or representatives of other jihadi groups are due to arrive to Jalalabad today to participate in this session and discuss the formation of a new cabinet.

Islamabad Seen as Sincere in Implementing Afghan Accord

BK1903144093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed sincere desire for the implementation of Islamabad accord for restoration of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan in letter and spirit and according to the timetable laid down in the accord. Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr. Amir Usman, called on President Borhanoddin Rabbani, in Kabul and conveyed to him the Government of Pakistan's message. He told President Rabbani that the Government of Pakistan was keenly following the talks being held in Jalalabad and hoped that positive results will come out of the deliberations among various leaders of Afghan jihad. President Rabbani thanked the Government of Pakistan for continued interest and said he was hopeful that Jalalabad talks will be successful and a permanent solution will be found for the Afghan problem.

India

Government Prepares Plan To Prevent Subversion

BK1803161893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The government has prepared a comprehensive action plan to prevent subversive activities like the bomb blasts in Bombay and Calcutta. Replying to clarifications in the Rajya Sabha today on a statement on the Calcutta bomb blast made in both the houses of parliament earlier, the minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot said the government is taking assistance of foreign agencies like Interpol for the investigation of the incidents. State governments have been asked to maintain maximum vigil and to step up security. He said more control rooms are being opened throughout the country to further step up the communication system of the security forces. Mr. Pilot called upon all political parties to rise above petty politics to restore confidence among people. He assured members that the government will not spare any person irrespective of any political link if he is found guilty.

Earlier, making a statement in both houses, Mr. Pilot said that nothing has come to government's notice so far suggesting any link between the blasts in Bombay and Calcutta. Mr. Pilot, who visited Calcutta yesterday, said that two persons have been arrested and a team of experts from various agencies are ascertaining the cause of the explosion. He said additional paramilitary forces are being made available to state governments.

The death toll in Tuesday's [16 March] bomb blast in Calcutta has risen to 66 with 13 more bodies recovered from the debris since last night. Three of the critically injured succumbed to their injuries at the hospital today. Giving this information, the state chief secretary, Mr. N. Krishnamurthy, said the forensic experts from Delhi and Bombay inspected the spot yesterday and today. According to police sources, chemical examination is still being carried out to find out the nature of the explosion.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is sending two parliamentary teams to Bombay and Calcutta to obtain information on the recent bomb blasts. The party's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Jaswant Singh, told newsmen in New delhi that the teams will meet the affected persons. He said that the government's statement on the Calcutta blast is not satisfactory.

Following the center's instructions to remain vigilant, Karnataka government has ordered to shoot at sight the antisocial elements involved in damaging life and property of the public. The state chief minister, Mr. Veerappa Moily, announced this in the legislative council today. He said the security measures are being beefed up and special care is being taken in the state capital where a large number of central government offices and undertakings are located.

Two Arrested in Bombay

BK1803164093 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The Bombay police in a dramatic breakthrough have arrested two persons who are said to have planted bombs in last Friday's attack in the city. The two were reportedly hired by the Memon family to set off the chain explosion. PTI quotes the police commissioner, Mr. A.S. Samra, as saying that the case is now solved to a good extent. One of the arrested had driven the explosive-laden scooter and parked it at Zaveri Bazar. The other had driven a bomb-laden jeep to Century Bazar. The interrogations revealed that the plot was hatched sometime in February with the explosives smuggled into the country early this month. Both the accused were nabbed from their residences late last night.

In another development, Interpol has begun an international hunt for the Memon brothers who are wanted in connection with the Bombay blast. The agency has requested the authorities in the United Arab Emirates to help track down the Memon brothers. Reports from Dubayy say that the two key suspects had arrived there after the blasts. However, official sources have not been able to confirm the report. Meanwhile, the United States, Britain, Canada, Germany and several other countries have extended unequivocal support to India in its investigations to find out the hands and brains behind the terrorist act.

Live Bombs Found in Calcutta

BK1903034693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Bombay police have arrested two persons suspected to have planted two of the 13 bombs which killed over 200 people in the metropolis last Friday. Talking to newsmen in Bombay yesterday, Police Commissioner Mr. A.S. Samra disclosed that one of the arrested persons had driven the explosives-laden scooter and parked it at Zaveri Bazar. The other person drove the bomb-laden jeep to the Century Bazar. Mr. Samra added that the interrogation of the two has indicated that the plot was hatched sometime in the middle of February and the explosives must have been smuggled into the country around the first week of this month. With these arrests, police have taken into custody nine persons in this connection.

Meanwhile, four gangsters were killed in Thane yesterday in an encounter with the security forces. A large quantity of arms and ammunition has been recovered from the site of the encounter.

In West Bengal, the police have recovered 25 live bombs from Tuesday's blast site at Calcutta's Bow Bazaar street. One bomb exploded but no casualty has been reported. Our correspondent, quoting police sources, reports that the death toll has gone up to 66. Agency reports say a notorious underworld den, Mohammad Rashin Khan, was arrested in connection with the bomb blast and produced before the chief metropolitan magistrate, Calcutta. The magistrate remanded him to police custody till the 26th of this month.

The Bangladesh prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, has expressed deep shock at the Calcutta tragedy. In a message to the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, she said such reprehensible acts are a crime against humanity which Bangladesh condemns in the strongest terms.

Bomb Blast in Bombay, No Casualties

BK1903085893 Hong Kong AFP in English 0812 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Bombay, March 19 (AFP)—A crude bomb hidden in a scooter exploded in a crowded downtown street here Friday, sparking a brief panic but causing no casualties or damage, police said.

A police bomb squad rushed to the site and nearby shopkeepers pulled down their shutters following the blast, which occurred exactly one week after a dozen powerful bombs rocked the city leaving nearly 300 people dead.

A police spokesman said the blast in central Khetwadi area had "nothing to do with the series of explosions in the metropolis."

Police have accused members of the Muslim underworld of carrying out last week's lethal bombings at the stock

exchange, Air India headquarters, shopping centers, luxury hotels and other sites.

Meanwhile, in Calcutta, rescuers continued to comb the rubble of several buildings in a central district levelled by a massive explosion on Wednesday.

At least 66 people were killed in the blast, which occurred around midnight in a building owned by a gambling kingpin who was immediately put under arrest. Hospital sources have put the death toll at 86.

The authorities have virtually ruled out any connection between the Bombay and Calcutta blasts.

Calcutta police said Friday that the discovery of more than two dozen crude bombs in the debris of the building where the explosion occurred supported the theory that the blast may have been an accident.

They said that explosives stockpiled in the building by members of the gambling syndicate may have been detonated accidentally.

Security has been stepped up across the country since the Bombay blasts and police in numerous cities have been kept busy responding to a rash of bomb hoax calls.

Blast Affects Supply of Bauxite in Bihar

BK1803162893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] In Bihar, supply of bauxite from Bagru mines in Lohardaga through trolleys was disrupted, following a bomb explosion late last night in the ropeway to the railway siding. The deputy commissioner Lohardaga told our Ranchi correspondent that the repair work has begun. Rail services in Lohardaga-Ranchi section has been suspended until further orders in view of the disruptive acitivities. Our correspondent reports that all the bogies of the passenger train which were derailed in the section yesterday morning were brought to Ranchi late last night. Dispatch of coal from Chita coal mines in eastern coal field through railways is also affected by the economic blockade.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader, Mr. Sibu Soren, has said that the militants are joining the movement for a separate state. Speaking during zero hour in the Lok Sabha today, he said the center should immediately start dialogue to solve the issue. Mr. Soren said since the region is a major source of coal and uranium to the nation it is very harmful that an agitation of such a nature should continue for long.

Dinesh Singh Discusses Trade With ASEAN Official

BK1803040693 Singapore BUSINESS TIMES in English 17 Mar 93 p 3

[By Neel Patri in New Delhi]

[Text] Talks to establish sectoral dialogue relations between India and ASEAN began yesterday in what was seen as a move likely to boost trade and economic ties.

ASEAN secretary-general Ajit Singh, who led the delegation representing the regional grouping, said that while growth in bilateral trade is impressive, "India still accounts for only one per cent of ASEAN's global trade".

Mr Singh said he hoped that the new sectoral dialogue relations the two sides will establish today would go a long way in pushing two-way trade to new and higher levels.

Officials said trade between ASEAN and India has grown at about 11 per cent for the past few years. ASEAN exports to India reached US$ 1.4 billion in 1991 with imports totalling US$ 1.86 billion. ASEAN groups Indonesia Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Brunei.

"The strides made by India in advanced technology particularly in the processing of primary products, could be of great use to ASEAN," the secretary-general said. "Sharing of trade information and joint marketing of our common products would certainly be to our mutual advantage."

This could also extend to sharing the results of research and development efforts underway both in ASEAN and India, Mr Singh said.

The fourth ASEAN summit in Singapore last year welcomed sectoral dialogue relations with India in areas such as trade, investment and tourism.

ASEAN's last sectoral dialogue partner was South Korea, which was elevated to a full dialogue partner in July 1991. Its other dialogue partners are the United States Canada, Japan, the European Community, Australia and New Zealand.

Mr Singh noted that the sectoral dialogue begins at a time when India, like ASEAN which has agreed to establish a free trade area in 15 years is reassessing its policies, priorities and strategies.

"Moves toward economic deregulation, greater liberalisation and integration into the global market are familiar to ASEAN and we can readily identify ourselves with what India is setting out to do. In ASEAN, India will find a ready and willing partner to exploit the full potential of cooperation," he said.

External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh, who led the Indian delegation, praised the impressive growth achieved by ASEAN members. "With imports and exports each exceeding US$160 billion annually, ASEAN must count as one of the largest trading entities in the world.

"By any yardstick, the ASEAN experience is truly one which inspires others on the road to sustained development," he said.

Committee To Be Set Up

BK1803062293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] India and ASEAN are to set up a joint committee for cooperation in trade, investment, and tourism. This was announced at the end of the first sectoral dialogue between the two sides in New Delhi yesterday. Both sides also considered proposals for cooperation in several areas, including science and technology, and exports to third countries. New Delhi has offered to set up a fund to develop Indo-ASEAN programs and projects in the fields of tourism, management, trade, investment, and computers, as also solar energy and environment protection.

Importance of Defense Exports to ASEAN Stressed

BK1703085793 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 8 Mar 93 p 9

[By Pravin Sawhney]

[Text] India, for the first time, is entering the field of defence exports and providing product support facilities, with Malaysia emerging as a testing ground to larger ambitions in the ASEAN region.

Since the recent warming of Indo-Malaysian defence relations which resulted in the defence memorandum of understanding [MoU] signed last month between the two countries, the government has pinned hopes on Kuala Lumpur's varied military requirements to strengthen its new policy of exports and providing product support to a wide range of defence equipment.

This follows the changed geopolitical realities with the creation of an uncertain Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) which has forced India to seek self-reliance in defence product support. This implies manufacture of critical spares, setting up of overhauling and maintenance facilities for a large array of former Soviet equipment in the services armoury.

Given a frozen 1993-94 defence budget, the stress is not on new equipment imports (for which the sources have been diversified) but on creating a product support infrastructure, so that once exports pick up, more finances are made available for the services sustenance.

Malaysia, which has embarked on the transformation of its largely counter-insurgency force into a modern conventional army had signed an MoU with Britain in 1988 for its biggest-ever arms purchase estimated at MR [Malaysian ringgit] $4.8 billion over a period of five years commencing 1991. This is a onetime buy. More fundamental to an evolution of an armed forces are its training, operational logistics support, uninterrupted spares supply, maintenance facilities and defence product support to achieve self-reliance through indigenisation and joint research.

And this important need of the Malaysian armed forces is expected to be filled by India. During the recent visit of former defence minister Sharad Pawar to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had sought Delhi's support to create a modern lean, mean armed forces with sufficient firepower and mobility.

Also discussed was the issue of assured logistics support in case Malaysia bought Russian MiG-29 air superiority aircraft, which are available at less than half the price of comparable US F-16 aircraft, with the yearly maintenance of 3 single F-16 itself costing about $2.5 million. Moreover, the recent Gulf war has demonstrated that F-16 is primarily an attack aircraft, and its purchase is likely to raise doubts about Kuala Lumpur's peaceful intentions in the region agog with mutual recriminations over territorial disputes .

Although the US F-16 aircraft has better multi-mode radar and avionics, it is eventually the pilot training, package of latest missiles and aircraft maintenance which dictates the results. And India can provide this at low costs and time frame .

India has already contracted with Russia for the setting up of MiG-29 aircraft overhauling facilities in India costing about Rs 550 crore. The air force has expressed willingness to train the Royal Malaysian air force (RMAF) pilots on MiG-29 aircraft. The RMAF technicians have been invited to study the maintenance facilities of various aircraft. And given the design drawings of the Russian latest fly-by-wire MiG-M variant, should Malaysia decide to buy it, India will be in a position to even maintain it.

With Russia likely to close down its MiG-29A and B variant production soon, India is expected to consider the joint-production of the aircraft, already in service with many former Soviet client nations. India, therefore, is likely to emerge as the sole nodal point for the entire ASEAN region for MiG-29 aircraft spares and support facilities.

And the political benefits of.the growing Indo-Malaysian defence relationship can hardly be overemphasised. India's emerging active defence policy, as evinced in the growing relationships with ASEAN nations, requires that India create a sound base for multi-sided defence cooperation: through development, modernisation and product support of compatible weapons in the region. For instance, if Malaysia decides to buy the US F-16 aircraft, India loses a potential client for its maintenance.

If India is to prepare for a greater role, it will need to foster close defence links, alongwith other areas of commerce and trade, with ASEAN nations. Even today, traditionally India views the Strait of Malacca in Indonesia are falling in its area of interest, as nearly 4,000 merchant ships alone pass through it every month.

It is, therefore, necessary that India build its defence infrastructure to emerge as a nodal maintenance and

overhauling agency for former Soviet equipment in the region. Political clout through defence strings is a time-tested recipe for definitive say in the region.

Accords With Moldova To Strengthen Bilateral Ties

BK1903092493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] India and Moldova have signed six agreements to strengthen bilateral ties marking the state visit of President Mircea Ion Snegur to New Delhi. One of the agreements is the declaration on principles and directions of cooperation. The other agreements relate trade, economic cooperation, science and technology and culture. The trade agreement valid for five years provides for business transactions in hard currency.

Chavan Says No Elections in Former BJP-Ruled States

BK1603162093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, has said that elections in the four states where the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] governments were dismissed will not be held unless the communalization in politics and administration in these states do not change for the positive. He was replying to a discussion in the Rajya Sabha today on the bills seeking to delegate powers of the state legislatures to the president in respect of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan. He said the former BJP governments in these states had even communalized the textbooks and the minorities had been the worst sufferers. The bills were later passed by a voice vote.

Participating in the discussion earlier, most of the members criticized the BJP for making a mockery of the Constitution and the judiciary. Some wanted changes made by the BJP governments in these states in the education system and illegal allotment of land to the banned organizations to be rectified.

Janata Dal-A Rules Out Merger With Congress-I

BK1603035893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The Janata Dal-A has ruled out the possibility of merger of the party with the Congress-I. The party's national general secretaries—Mr. Sunil Shastri and Mr. Satyapal Singh Yadav—told newsmen in Lucknow yesterday that their conditional support to the Narasimha Rao government, will, however, continue.

Communist Party Amends Constitution, Structure

BK1403033893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Mar 93

[Text] The Communist Party of India has amended the party's constitution to make it two-tier from the present three-tier setup. Its national conference being held in Trichur, Kerala, has adopted the amendment. A spokesman of the party told newsmen in Trichur that the party secretariat has also been replaced with a national council and national executive.

Rao Said Donning 'Mantle of Supreme Leader'

BK1403133293 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 5 Mar 93 p 1

[By Chandan Mitra]

[Text] New Delhi, March 4—Has Mr. Sharad Pawar become a party to signing his own political death-warrant? Or has a suddenly resurgent Mr. Narasimha Rao bitten off more than he can chew? Will the humbled Maratha chieftain now join forces with the wily Thakur [Brahman] from Madhya Pradesh to mount a serious challenge to Mr. Rao's leadership later this year?

These questions crossed the minds of many Congressmen and other politicians today. If Mr. Rao's strategy in suddenly sidelining Mr. Pawar hasn't been comprehended, the Maharashtra leader's acquiescence in the move has been equally baffling. Pawar-watchers, however, may well say that it's reminiscent of a cartoon in a contemporary at the time of Mr. Sharad Pawar's challenge to Mr. Narasimha Rao after the 1991 Lok Sabha poll [sentence as published].

In the cartoon's first frame Mr. Pawar, dressed like a mediaeval Maratha warrior, was shown charging towards Delhi at great speed. The second frame showed him surveying his paltry troops with much satisfaction. But the clinching third frame depicted him reverentially garlanding Mr. Narasimha Rao. The cartoon's caption was "he came, he saw, he concurred".

Was it, then, a characteristic case of Mr. Pawar losing nerve at the last moment, as he is prone to do outside the security of his home State? Conventional wisdom has it that the Prime Minister candidly told the outgoing Defence Minister that if he refused, the post would go to his arch rival, Mr. S.B. Chavan.

Worried that Mr. Chavan, in association with the deposed Chief Minister, Mr. Sudhakarrao Naik, would demolish his political/financial network, Mr. Pawar had to abide by Mr Rao's directive. Since, in his one-and-a-half year stint in Delhi, Mr. Pawar had failed to create a national constituency for himself, he must have been alarmed at the thought of losing his Maharashtra base too.

Whatever the reason for Mr. Pawar's concurrence in Mr. Rao's scheme, the fact is that he cannot be happy about it. In the public perception, he has been demoted and Mr. Rao has played a Chanakya-like master stroke. Further, by agreeing to return to Bombay, Mr. Pawar has allowed his national stature as a potential successor to Mr. Rao, to suffer grievously.

His shell-shocked supporters argued yesterday that, foolishly, he had now left the field wide open to Mr. Arjun Singh. But judging by the latest Machiavellian streak emerging in the Prime Minister's actions, this seems unlikely. Mr. Arjun Singh has already been cut to size considerably. By changing the seating arrangement in Parliament, Mr. Rao has already shown Mr. Arjun Singh his place.

Undoubtedly, the Prime Minister is waiting for an opportunity to hit at Mr. Arjun Singh again. With elections in Madhya Pradesh bound to be held during the next winter, it wouldn't be entirely surprising if he is despatched to the State as the PCC [Pradesh, State, Congress Committee] chief ostensibly to take on the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] challenge.

In the process of asserting his authority, however, Mr. Rao might have helped to consolidate dissent against his own leadership. Mr. Sharad Pawar may have been compelled to accept this "demotion", but his outraged supporters will henceforth gang-up with other dissidents to cause trouble. An indication of this was available today from the elaborate lunch hosted by Mr. Suresh Kalmadi at his residence, which was followed by a petition to the Prime Minister seeking reconsideration of his decision.

It is clear that Mr. Narasimha Rao has finally decided that he will not merely reign but rule. By summarily "demoting" Mr. Pawar, close on the heels of humiliating Mr. Arjun Singh, the Prime Minister wants to tell Congressmen that he has decided to don the mantle of supreme leader. No longer does he need a system of shifting alliances—keeping Mr. Pawar in good humour while dealing with Mr. Arjun Singh, for instance—in order to retain his position at the top.

As a strategy, this is unexceptionable as far as Mr. Rao is concerned. Besides, as a general principle, authority is to be wielded, not kept under lock and key. The only problem for the Congress, however, is that Mr. Rao is not yet a vote-catcher. As elections steadily come closer, misgivings about going to the voter with Mr. Rao at the helm, will gather momentum. And if chieftains like Mr. Arjun Singh and Mr. Pawar find that the Congress's fortunes are not improving, they may panic and seek to dislodge him.

Such a scenario, however, is very much in the realms of speculation. For the present, Mr. Rao has won the day and sent his critics reeling. Whether they will be able to marshal sufficient forces to pose a challenge to his authority—even if not his leadership—in time for the AICC [All India Congress Committee] later this month remains to be seen.

At the moment, the regrouping of dissidents—overt and covert—appears unlikely. Mr. Narasimha Rao seems to have got a breather till after the monsoons. But the price he is paying may eventually turn out to be very high.

Defense Scientist on Success in Radar, Other Technologies

BK1603114393 Delhi PATRIOT in English 2 Mar 93 p 6

[Text] Indian scientists have achieved a major success by developing the phased array radar, critical for its "Akash" surface-to-air missile, according to the scientific advisor to Defence Minister, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, reports PTI.

This radar, which the West is not willing to sell to India, can track over 100 targets at a time. This critical component in India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Dr. Kalam, who is also heading the DRDO, said.

The Defence Ministry has identified several critical areas for future development as its peaceful missile development programme has been viewed with suspicion in the West, he told reporters here yesterday.

Dr. Kalam, regarded as the brain behind India's successful missile programmes said the US decision to impose a ban on the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and continued threat of a complete ban under the Missile Control Technology Regime (MTCR) has given a fillip to India's-missile programme.

Criticising the West for overreacting to India's indigenous missile development programmes, Dr. Kalam said, science and technology has progressed so fast that even if the West wanted to curb India's missile programmes, they will not succeed.

He said the multinational defence manufacturers with the help of foreign media was "constantly bombarding us with false propaganda" on India's defence research programmes. Further, he said "the West also had an ulterior motive behind such moves as they want their defence equipment production units to run three shifts."

Dr. Kalam said the "Prithvi" surface-to-surface battlefield tactical missile designed for the Indian Army was almost ready for production while the Air Force version needs some more test firing.

He said all the three versions of the "Trishul" surface-to-air missile were at an advanced stage of development. Especially, the naval version with sea-skimming ability is a "real success," he claimed.

The indigenous Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA) "Lakshya," which the three services wanted to induct for battlefield surveillance as a force multiplier was also getting ready, he said.

The Indian media should project the true image of Indian defence programmes and "we should believe in our capability and celebrate even a small invention" which Dr. Kalam said will encourage the hardworking Indian scientists.

Article Reviews Progress in Defense Production

BK1203134993 Delhi PATRIOT in English 4 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Cecil Victor from the "Analysis" column]

[Text] The decision to mass-produce the Arjun main battle tank sets at rest the criticism that the Defence Research and Development Organisation [DRDO] was nurturing a white elephant. It is as heartening for the nation as it is for the scientists and technicians who have worked on it for nearly two decades.

Particularly remarkable is the Government's decision to expedite the production, even though limited. It is a welcome departure from the licensed-production mindset that has plagued national security ever since the first attempts at "self reliance" degenerated into dependence by other means.

What has facilitated the quick transfer from prototype to operational tank is the parallel process of design and development and integration with predesignated production units so that transition is smooth and swift.

It is the same approach that has characterised the other great achievement personally supervised by Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister A.P.J. Abdul Kalam—the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme for which a state-of-the-art phased array system capable of search, track and destruction of 100 airborne targets at the same time has also been developed by DRDO.

One hopes and wishes that similar success will come the way of the other long-awaited technology mission, the light combat aircraft (LCA). For India, these are first generation weapons systems given the fact that the Vijayanta tank was mainly a British product produced under license and the first indigenously-produced fighter aircraft HF-24 Marut long ago became a decoration piece at the gates of airbases around the country before it could give birth to a successor.

There is a lesson for India in the Marut episode. It is that the incremental growth of any weapons system is critically dependent on the power plant. An indigenous engine whether it be for an aircraft or tank or vehicle lends itself to improvements, modifications and upgradation thereby opening the way for improved or new weapons platforms.

That is why the decision to start production of the Arjun main battle tank with a German MTU 1500 HP engine is not an unmixed blessing. Even if the engine is manufactured in India under license by Kirloskars, the next generation of Indian tanks could become dependent on foreign technology inputs. The indigenous tank engine project failed to live up to expectations in spite of former Scientific Adviser V.S. Arunachalam's rosy projections. Reports that the project has been dropped are disturbing.

If that is true then it means that the entire Arjun project will depend on the MTU engine, not just the first batch of 126 that are to join the Army within the next 15 months. This is what we warned about in these columns many years ago.

It is one thing to use a foreign engine to "prove the systems" of the prototypes but quite another to continue with a foreign engine into production. Given the stab of the arms market, the foreign exchange crunch, and the need to modernise tank regiments that are equipped with the old T-55 Soviet tanks (which has since been upgunned) it is understandable that the Government has decided to go ahead with batch production with the MTU engine. But if the design and development of an indigenous engine is to be stopped then we are laying the seeds of future dependence.

The same logic has been put for the prototype stage of the LCA. It is common knowledge that the Kaveri engine must shed some weight if the thrust-to-weight ratio of the LCA is to be viable. In the meantime the prototypes will be "proved" with a US engine.

Caught between the necessity of expediting long-gestating indigenous weapons programmes and foreign pressures to penetrate the Indian projects one can only wish the Indian scientists success in every segment of their endeavour because even if it is "less than 30 per cent," a foreign component as important as the engine could cast its shadow on the future.

Tank Production Said 'Hurried'

BK1303143993 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 2 Mar 93 p 9

[By Pravin Sawhney: "Green Signal for Arjun Premature"]

[Text] While Defence Minister Sharad Pawar formally announced the limited production of battle tank Arjun after witnessing its firepower and mobility on Sunday [28 February], top army sources say the hurried move is likely to result in major technical and maintenance problems for combat units.

The sealing of the tank design on the written recommendations of Army chief Gen S.F. Rodrigues, who at the same ranges on February 1 expressed full satisfaction with the dynamic performance and firepower of Arjun, will now result in the production of 126 tanks to equip two armoured regiments.

Also set into motion will be the identification of the private sector to assist the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for indigenisation and possible export of Arjun.

For instance, the Kirloskars have expressed willingness to assist in the manufacture of the tank engine based on the German 1,400 horse power MTU engine design.

Arjun is also expected to be put up at the annual world tank exhibition in Canada in 1994 to catch the eyes of prospective buyers, according to Mr Pawar.

While the Defence Ministry has identified Avadi (Madras), Pune and Hyderabad as the probable places for setting up Arjun production and assembly lines, much will depend on the available finances, as each tank is expected to cost Rs [rupees] 7 crore, having 30 percent imported components, Mr Pawar told a visiting team of journalists.

The limited Arjun tank demonstration, meant primarily for MPs, showed the tank running admirably at top speed on the tarmac road and erasing a vintage brick structure, at an ambience temperature of 20 degrees centigrade.

Also demonstrated was the firepower of the only two manufactured pre-production models employing secondary HESH ammunition, both when the target and tank were static and moving tank on static target.

Sources pointed out the standard armour firepower test of both moving tank and target using primary APFSDS ammunition and agility test of step-ditch gradient should have been shown.

Moreover, there was no means for the audience to assess the target damage, as in three cases only dust was kicked up at the target end, instead of a flash which results from a head-on metal hit.

Also required was a penetration demonstration of T-72 tank APFSDS - firing on an earlier manufactured Arjun model. And night firing capability using thermal imaging system was not demonstrated, because of lack of time.

The biggest problem, however, is that after last year's summer trials, when Arjun had shown major flaws, confirmatory summer trials at 50 degree ambience temperature to vindicate the modifications carried out, are yet to be conducted.

Consider the following shortcomings in the tank.

A 58-ton tank (minimum expected weight with full combat load) losing 20 percent engine power (derating phenomenon) in 45 to 50 degrees ambience temperature would be unaccepable to combat units.

Though for operation moves this will not pose any problem, in a tactical battle-field maximum torque and power are required for rapid acceleration from one hull down position to another.

This engine derating will be more pronounced as the engine wears. Such a defect requires major modification, which is not possible after the tank design has been sealed.

While no troops trials have yet been conducted, the integrated tank model has not even been tested in the watered fields of Punjab, which is a major battleground. Except for national highway-1, which is a class 70 classification road, all state highways in Punjab are class-40 roads, which may not be able to take the tank's weight.

The gunnery aspect problems (concerning accurate fire power) noticed during last summer have not yet been tested with the required cooling contraption.

In fact, such a contraption impedes the required gun movement of 360 degrees by over 5 degrees. In itself, this is a minor problem. But doubts have been cast on the limits of gun depression itself, which is a serious flaw.

Radio communications for the tank are yet to be decided. While officials feel the existing Arjun, what is required is a electro-magnetic compatibility policy in a complex battle-field involving communications between armour, artillery, engineers and both Russian and indeginous tanks, especially below brigade levels where AREN is not available.

Arjun, which is more a complex than a sophisticated tank, is likely to have major maintenance problems, with heavy logistics load on the light repairs workshops and the combat units. Especially, when in the absence of troops trials, the combat units are not conversant with its complex systems.

And the tank does not yet have the publicised nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) protection, as DRDO is still to manufacture the turret seals.

Meanwhile, Mr Pawar's announcement on the "successful" demonstration brings the curtains down on a chapter, which began 18 years ago and had snowballed into a national issue.

Started in 1974 with a cost of Rs 15.5 crore, a total of Rs 280 crore had been sanctioned. Having expended only Rs 240 crore, the project has been achieved according to Mr Pawar.

The pre-production model trials were witnessed, apart from Mr Pawar, by his deputy, the defence secretary, the defence production secretary and Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the scientific advisor.

The MPs present included Jaswant Singh, Kamal Chaudhary, M.C. Bandare, Maj Gen (retd) B. C. Khanduri, Ajub Khan, Bapu Kaldate, Satchidanand Manphool Singh and S.C. Mathur.

Samajwadi Janata Party Criticizes Economic Policies

BK1303160693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Mar 93

[Text] The Samajwadi Janata Party has urged the secular forces to come together to defeat the evil designs of communal forces. In a resolution adopted at the end of the two-day meeting of the national executive in New Delhi today, the party urged the government to take firm steps to ensure peace and protect the life and property of the citizens. Its economic resolution has criticized the center's policies and alleged that the budget seems to be weighed in favor of the foreign investor and the elite at home.

Optimism Expressed on Export Growth Rate

BK1503102593 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 4 Mar 93 p 12

[By Bhushan Marwah]

[Text] New Delhi, March 3—In the wake of the export incentive package, particularly full convertibility of rupee on trade account, announced in the Budget, the Commerce Ministry is exuding confidence to achieve an impressive export growth rate to the tune of 15 per cent in volume and 18 per cent in dollar terms during the coming financial year (1993-94).

Suddenly, the mood in the corridors of the Commerce Ministry is upbeat. The refrain hitherto has been: "The Commerce Ministry proposes, the Finance Ministry disposes". Perhaps for the first time, the Commerce Ministry had its way in pushing through virtually all the demands it impressed upon the Finance Ministry to accelerate export effort. Evidently, the Budget document has recognised exports as an instrument of economic growth.

The Eighth Plan projections have envisaged the economy growing at the rate of 5.6 per cent per annum with export growth to be in the region 13.8 per cent per annum and the imports limited to eight per cent per annum.

However, current year's export performance, though better than last year's, will fall far short of the Plan target. The total export during 1992-93 may not exceed $19 million and is likely to record only six per cent growth. The total export growth rate in first three quarters of 1992-93 was 3.5 per cent in dollar terms.

Export performance has been depressed, particularly by the decline of more than 60 per cent in exports to Russia and othe States of the former Soviet Union during the current year. The growth of exports to the general currency area during the period was 11.4 per cent.

On the other hand, the imports during the current year have increased faster, resulting in the widening of the trade deficit. The total value of imports in US dollars during the first three quarters of the current year increased by 16.5 per cent. The current account deficit in 1992-93 is expected to be around US seven billion dollars.

According to Commerce Ministry sources, in view of the measure announced in the Budget to stimulate the present sluggish growth rate of exports, the balance of payments position will considerably improve during 1993-94. While the efforts would be to achieve the export growth rate of nearly 18 per cent, the imports are likely to be restricted to around 12 per cent. "We must export nearly six per cent more than the imports, as envisaged in the current plan projections, to manage our balance of payments", the sources said.

By far the most significant incentive to boost exports is the introduction of full convertibility of rupee on trade acccount which would enable all exporters to convert 100 per cent of their earnings at the unified market determined exchange rate. Export receipts were earlier converted into rupee at two rates—60 per cent of the receipts at the market rate and 40 per cent of the receipts at the rate of exchange based on the Reserve Bank's official rate.

The exporters have been cribbing that existence of a dual rate grievously hurt them and other foreign exchange earners as they have to surrender 40 per cent of their earnings at the official rate, getting the benefit of the higher market rate on only 60 per cent. They maintained that this amounted to a tax on exporters of goods and services, whose continuation could not be justified at a time when exports must receive Government's fullest support.

Another significant incentive which would give a fillip to the exports is the reduction of the interest rate on rupee export credit by one percentage point. It is felt that the banks may further reduce this interest rate by 0.5 per cent because the Government has also waived the interest tax in case of export credit from banks.

Besides, lowering import duty on several items which are used as inputs for export production will also give a push to the export effort. Lot of export items are in fact import-intensive such as gems and jewellery. However, certain amount of import is needed in most of the export areas. For instance, food processing which is a major thrust area for exports, imports are needed both for processing technology and packaging to improve the shelf-life.

The other major incentives to boost imports include abolition of excise duty on tea and coffee, removal of export duties on items like iron ore, unpolished granite and extension for one year of 100 per cent Income-Tax exemption on software exports under section 80 HHE of the Income-Tax Act.

Rupee Convertibility To Raise Cost of Oil Imports

BK1503102193 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 93 pp 1, 24

[By Bhushan Marwah]

[Text] New Delhi, March 5—India's import bill for crude and petroleum products for the coming financial year will shoot up by nearly Rs [rupees] 3,500 crore on account of the full convertibility of rupee on trade account announced by the Finance Minister in the Budget.

A hike in the prices of petroleum products will, therefore, become inevitable.

It is provisionally estimated by the Petroleum Ministry that the outgo of foreign exchange for import of petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL) during 1993-94 would be around $6.8 billion to meet the growing demand. The figure is based on the premise that the growth rate of consumption of petroleum products would be restricted to five percent during the year.

Under the unified market-determined exchange rate system, enforced in the wake of full convertibility of rupee on trade account, the oil companies would have to pay considerably more for growing imports of crude and petroleum products than what they have been shelling out while buying the US dollar at the rate of exchange based on the Reserve Bank's official rate.

Even if the price of US dollar appreciates by Rs 5 under the unified exchange rate mechanism, as compared to the earlier official exchange rate, the POL import worth nearly $7 billion estimated for next financial year would cost an additional nearly Rs 3,500 crore.

In rupee terms the country's POL import bill during 1993-94 is likely to be a whopping nearly Rs 22,400 crore against the current year's (1992-93) corresponding figure of nearly Rs 15,300 crore—an increase of around Rs 7,000 crore.

According to oil industry sources, to make up for the appreciation of dollar in the wake of full convertibility of rupee the administered prices of petroleum products would have to be raised by the oil companies at least by Rs 500 per selling unit to mop up nearly Rs 3,000 crore in a full year. It would imply that prices of petrol would go up by at least 50 paise per litre and that of LPG [liquefied petroleum gas] cylinders (14.2 kg) for domestic use by nearly Rs 8.

The hike in the administered prices of petroleum products would have to be still steeper if the Government decides to do away with the massive subsidy being given for kerosene and LPG supplied for domestic consumption. There is a subsidy content of Rs 2.50 to Rs 2.80 per litre of kerosene catered through the Public Distribution System [PDS]. The total supply of nearly 8.4 million tonnes of kerosene through PDS carries a hefty subsidy of nearly Rs 3,000 crore. Similarly, each LPG cylinder for domestic use entails a subsidy of Rs 70—a total subsidy on this count works out to be Rs 1,145 crore.

In his customary post-Budget briefing to newsmen, the Finance Secretary had conceded that with the introduction of unified exchange rate based on market forces, the cost of POL imports would considerably go up. At the same time, he hoped that the situation would be managed by surplus in oil pool accounts and need for an increase in the prices of petroleum products would not arise in the near future.

However, according to informed sources, the oil pool accounts have hardly any surplus to absorb the additional increase in the prices of imported POL and another hike in the prices of petroleum products would have to be resorted to sooner than later.

The pool account started generating surplus from the financial year 1983-84 onwards and the deposit in the public account till the year 1988-89 was nearly Rs 8,900 crore. However, from the financial year 1989-90 onwards, the pool account started generating deficit which continued mounting year after year despite sizable increases in the prices effected on a number of occasions. The deficit generated during three years beginning from 1989-90 to 1991-92 amounted to nearly Rs 7,000 crore.

The latest increase in the prices of petroleum products, effected in September 1992 and the fourth since 1989, was primarily aimed at wiping out the mounting deficit in the oil pool account. An overall increase of 18 per cent was effected to fetch the oil companies Rs 3,200 to Rs 3 400 crore in a full year. The additional earnings during the remaining part of the current year were expected to be around Rs 1,900 crore.

But for the September hike in the prices of petroleum products, the deficit in the oil pool account for the current year (1992-93) was expected to be around Rs 2,500 crore, according to official source.

Significantly, the Government has assured the World Bank and the IMF that it would not allow the deficit in the oil pool accounts to continue. Other implications of the deficit in the pool account include creation of working capital problem for oil companies and the resource crunch for meeting their plant outlay. Also, profitability of the oil companies is affected due to forced market borrowings at high rates of interest.

Minister Reiterates Stand on Dunkel Proposals

BK1403033493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Mar 93

[Text] The agriculture minister, Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar, has reiterated that the Dunkel proposals will be accepted only if they are beneficial to the Indian farmers. He said the government will carefully examine the proposals before coming to any conclusion. Dr. Jakhar was addressing farmers and agiricultire scientists in Meerut yesterday.

Reacting to the criticism of the draft agriculture policy, Dr. jakhar said that the government will consider any practical suggestion and is open to making changes in the draft policy.

Proposals Called 'Iniquitous'

BK1503122193 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 93 p 13

[Editorial: "Doubts on Dunkel"]

[Text] The half-a-lakh members of the Bharatiya Kisan [Indian Farmers] Union and the Karnataka Rajya Ryot Sangh [State Farmers Association], who demonstrated

against the Dunkel proposals in New Delhi on Wednesday, may not be knowing much about who Arthur Dunkel is or what the GATT talks are all about. But they seem to be sufficiently aware of where the proposals promulated by the GATT Director-General could hurt them most. The [passage illegible] [Passive Resistance for Seeds], as the agitation has been named, is about the farmers' rights over one of their basic inputs. Passing on the control of seeds to the multinational companies, which is what the Dunkel proposals on agriculture seek to do, would deny free access of farmers to this vital resource. It is not just the question of the prices at which the farmers would then have to buy seeds but the monopolistic control of all meaningful agricultural activity that could have the effect of marginalising the farmers themselves, which worries them. The damage that would be done to bio-diversity as a result is another issue. A study conducted by the Tokyo-based UN University has pointed out that the recent drought in Karnataka's Dharwar district was due to the failure of the hybrid sorghum crop and destruction of the indigenous genetic diversity and not due to the erratic rainfall, as had been claimed, earlier. This should be illustrative of the damage that continued erosion of bio-diversity could cause to agriculture and the environment in developing countries.

Of course, the implications of the Dunkel proposals on agriculture go far beyond the control of the seed-banks. In its attempt to "globalise" agriculture, the Dunkel Draft seeks to abridge national sovereignty to the extent that governments cease to be able to control food imports except in extreme cases of balance of payments difficulties. Correspondingly, the governments will not be competent to check foodgrains exports however serious their domestic needs may be. And as for subsidising the public distribution system, governments are barred from doing it beyond prescribed limits irrespective of the state of the nutritional needs of the people. However, the Dunkel Draft holds out the prospect of exporting foodgrains at world market prices. That explains why a section among the big farmers has begun to start lending some support to the Dunkel Draft—freeing them, as it would do, from the obligation of meeting domestic food needs. But the issues involved are far more basic than the sectional interests of any particular group or lobby. And thus it is hardly the thing to be decided on the basis of rallies and counter-rallies. If anything, the rallies only help to warn the government against rushing into signing the controversial Draft on its current iniquitous terms.

Iran

Qods Day Rallies Mark Palestinian Solidarity

LD1903095293 Tehran IRNA in English 0830 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 19, IRNA—Cries of "down with Israel" and "down with U.S." echoed in city streets here and elsewhere throughout the country and the Islamic world as fasting Muslims staged magnificent rallies to mark the international day of solidarity with the Palestinians—or the day of al-Qods [Jerusalem].

The demonstrations in Iran, held on the last Friday of the holy fasting month of Ramadan designated by the late leader of the Islamic revolution Imam Khomeyni as the "al-Qods Day" and marked since 1979, was just another manifestation of solidarity of the people of Iran with the oppressed Palestinians.

The Muslim people of Iran once again demonstrated to the world that Palestine was an inseparable part of the united Islamic entity, that al-Qods is the "First Qibla" and the "beating heart" of the Islamic world.

Today's slogans in support of Palestine were another strong rejection of the compromising plans to betray the Palestinian cause and a disgrace for the governments who want to reconcile with the Zionist regime and have closed their eyes to the horrible crimes being perpetrated against Muslims in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

In Tehran, demonstrators, including young and old men and women as well as children, began marching from early morning and various directions towards the Tehran University braving the cold winter weather. There they listened to the Friday prayers sermons by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Officials described the huge presence of the masses in the Tehran rally as "unprecedented."

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani spoke to the worshipers briefly about the performance of his government in the current calendar year (ending tomorrow). He also termed the Palestine issue as "the most important issue of the world." (The president's remarks at the prayers will be carried separately later).

The demonstrators here carried pictures of Imam Khomeyni, leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, as well as banners with slogans in support of Palestine.

The presence of hundreds of shroud-wearing Basij (voluntary) forces among the demonstrators was eye-catching. They announced their readiness to contribute to the jihad for the liberation of Palestine and for repelling the aggression of the criminal Serbs in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

A 9-point resolution was also read at the end of the rally just before the Friday prayers sermons started, which called for continuation of "jihad operations" against the "occupiers of al-Qods."

The al-Qods day resolution also termed the U.S. and the Zionist regime as "number one" enemies of the Islamic world and reiterated all-out support for the "intifadah" (uprising).

"...We strongly condemn the deportation of the innocent Palestinians by the usurper and criminal Zionist regime, rendering homeless of defenceless Muslims in Tajikistan, creation of tension in the newly-independent

republics of Central Asia, ruthless massacre and genocide of the oppressed nation of Bosnia-Hercegovina in Europe, and silence of the international organizations towards these events as blatant examples of hostility and conspiracy by the arrogant powers against Muslims, and firmly demand the return of the displaced Muslims, particularly the honorable Palestinians to their motherland. We also urge the vigilant and justice-seeking conscience of the world to protest these savage acts and support their (the deportees) legitimate rights."

It also condemned any compromise and the so-called peace talks with the Zionist regime as a move in the direction of "trampling the blood of the martyrs" and "selling out the defenceless Palestinian nation". "Palestine belongs to the people of Palestine and no one has the right to cede this sacred Islamic land to the enemies of Islam."

The resolution said "armed jihad" and "martyrdom-seeking struggle" was the only way to counter the "tyranny and crime" of the oppressive powers such as the U.S., Israel and the "Serb butchers." It also urged all Arab and Islamic states to fully support the "invulnerable Palestinian and Bosnian heroes."

"We warn the Islamic world that the question of Palestine and of Bosnia are not regional and ethnic issues but those of over one billion Muslims...if the enemies triumph in these scenes today it will be the turn of Arab states and Muslim settlers in the Balkans and other Islamic lands tomorrow. Therefore, we urge all zealous youth and Muslims throughout the world to form resistance cells against the enemies...and vigilantly watch the schemes of the enemies."

The demonstrators also stressed the need for carrying out the death sentence against apostate Salman Rushdie and severely condemned "the plots of the enemies of Islam" in defending the apostate.

Naqdi Assassination Attributed to Regime

NC1903074093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] According to reports disseminated by news agencies on 17 March, another opponent of the Islamic Republic of Iran named Mohammad Hoseyn Naqdi was assassinated in Rome. Reports say that Naqdi was killed by two armed men on a motorcycle in a residential area in northeastern Rome while on his way home. Until 1982 Naqdi was the Iranian ambassador to Italy. The same year he left the regime and joined the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization.

Although Naqdi's assassins have not yet been identified, Iran's clerical regime undoubtedly is involved. As is obvious from the regime's character, the hands of the Islamic Republic again have been involved in the murder of a political opponent.

We condemn Naqdi's assassination and request and demand that the Italian Government identify, arrest, and try the assassins as soon as possible and not allow the terrorists to escape with clear consciences. We also call on international organizations and various other circles and forums to adopt a firm stance on the assassinations and the murderous nature of Iran, which is the main source of such inhuman phenomena, and to disgrace this regime as much as possible.

We at the Voice of Iranian Kordestan extend our condolences to the family and relatives of Mohammad Hoseyn Naqdi.

DPK Sends Letter to Mitterrand About Bombing

NC1903081093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 18 Mar 93

["Text" of a letter from Mostafa Hejri, secretary general of the Democratic Party of Kordestan of Iran, to French President Francois Mitterrand on 15 March]

[Text] Mr. President: I regretfully inform you that at 1015 on 13 March, six Iranian bombers attacked the Democratic Party of Kordestan's [DPK] Political Bureau Headquarters in an area guarded by allied air forces near the Iranian border. Four were killed and about 10 others wounded in this attack. A large number of houses of defenseless people also were destroyed. Freedom Hospital, run by French doctors and nurses affiliated with an international medical assistance organization and the Organization of World Doctors, also was attacked and damaged. Fortunately the French [word indistinct] of the hospital was not harmed. Because of the heavy bombing, however, the hospital's staff was forced to temporarily leave the bombed area.

Mr. President: In view of the fact that the bombed area is part of the area guarded by the allied air forces under Security Council Resolution 688; in view of the fact that the DPK has had, but never used, opportunities to attack the regime behind the Iran-Iraq border and that the DPK has limited its activities to the territory of Iranian Kordestan; and, finally, in view of the fact that any flights by Iraqi planes over this area is forbidden, the only conclusion that can be drawn from this incident is that the allied forces have been indulgent toward Iran and given it a free hand in carrying out such attacks. Giving the Iranian regime a free hand in resorting to such acts actually is tantamount to giving it a free hand in the blatant violation of Security Council Resolution 688 and of international conventions, regulations, and pacts.

Unfortunately, the experiences of the past 14 years clearly have shown that the international community's indifference, the absence of a comprehensive and firm decision, and the condescending behavior by some European governments have made the Islamic Republic's regime more blatant in carrying out its inhuman acts and in violating the UN Charter and the World Human Rights Declaration.

Mr. President: In view of France's great influence in the world community as a permanent member of the Security Council, in view of its role in the allied forces in charge of safeguarding this area, and in view of your personal support for human rights and international laws and pacts, we request that you pressure Iran to observe the UN Charter and the World Human Rights Declaration, both of which it has signed.

[Signed] With great respect, Mostafa Hejri, DPK secretary general.

Kordestan, 15 March 1993.

Nakhichevan's Aliyev Thanks Iran for Assistance

LD1803112593 Tehran IRNA in English 1112 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Tabriz (East Azerbaijan), March 18, IRNA—Nakhichevan's head of state Geydar Aliyev said here today that future generations will never forget Iran's assistance to his country at the present crucial juncture.

On his way home from Tehran, Geydar Aliyev arrived in Tabriz Wednesday [17 March] night and described his meetings with Iranian officials as useful.

He called Tehran-Baku relations as being at the highest level and stressed the role of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic in expansion and consolidation of relations with the Islamic republic.

He expressed regret over the continuation of the Karabakh clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan and called for an immediate end to the conflict.

The Nakhichevan head of state held talks with the governor-general of the province, 'Ali Abdul-Alizadeh, on technical assistance for reconstruction of industries and agricultural lands in the autonomous republic.

Iran will deliver seeds and agricultural equipments to Nakhichevan to help bring 1,000 hectares of farmland under cultivation.

East Azerbaijan province will deliver 10,000 tons of asphalt materials to rebuild roads in Nakhichevan.

Minister Sees U.S.-Iranian 'War of Ideologies'

NC1903160593 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 13 Mar 93 p 15

[Part one of a two-part commentary by Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati: "Behind the Scenes of the New York Explosion"]

[Excerpts] In the two weeks since the dubious explosion at the World Trade Center, Western and U.S. media have blamed Islamic groups in an organized and coordinated manner.

Some U.S. television networks insinuated that the Islamic Revolution supports the perpetrators. The investigation encountered serious problems in finding the reason for or the cause of the explosion, and, deliberately or unwittingly, the FBI admitted it had no clues. Zionist circles, the number one suspect, tried to use the mass media to direct U.S. public opinion toward the Islamic groups. They even rushed to say that since Iran supports the Islamic groups, that is the Palestinians and Palestinian revolutionaries, the Islamic revolution is to blame?!! [punctuation as published]

The U.S. State Department issued its customary, cliched, half-baked statement, as it does annually mentioning Iran among the countries that they think are extremist and disruptive. Although the New York explosion was not mentioned, the statement's coming out afterward, projected a biased impression in news circles.

Despite our Foreign Ministry issuing its usual strongly worded and stern statement rejecting U.S. allegations and describing them as a ploy to mask the bloodthirsty face of the despotic regime in Palestine and an effort to divert public opinion from the Palestinian deportees' troubles, the fabrications continue. The United States sees the Islamic revolution as a strong barrier to its aggressive objectives under the "new world order."

Iran opposes Arab-Israeli peace talks. The Islamic revolution rallies to aid the Palestinian deportees and expose the West's deceit, indifference, and malice over the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Tehran supports the Lebanese people's struggle to retrieve their occupied territories. Iran opposes the partition of Iraq and intervention in the affairs of Iraq's oppressed people who are without shelter. The Islamic revolution also exposed their baseless slogans of human rights and respect for human rights in the Salman Rushdie issue and so wrecked the West's nerve.

The United States cannot combat Islamism with its manipulation. Today is the day of the renaissance of Islamic values, of the honor of the Muslim masses, and of the pride of those who carry Islam's banner high. [passage omitted]

You [the United States] know of our stances and of our contribution to promoting world peace and security, which is far greater than that of most Western countries, which merely raise slogans of peace. You know the Islamic revolution opposes terrorism and killing and you know that Imam Khomeyni, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said: Islam opposes every act that endangers the lives of innocent people. He also said that hijacking planes is contrary to Islamic and humanitarian sentiments. But your country and every Western country represent a haven for all those who carry out explosions, abductions, murder, massacre and hijackings. Don't you know this? If you know that, you are the ones who are antihuman, against human rights, and who support terrorism. Please say so. If you say you don't know, then look at THE WASHINGTON TIMES of 22 December 1992 in which there is an article on the dangers of

Monafeqin [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] getting close to the U.S. Administration: "The Iranian Group Lobbying Clinton." Isn't the danger that your intelligentsia and enlightened thinkers predict in that article getting closer? Aren't the Monafeqin pitching you against a billion Muslims by feeding you false and misleading analyses? Don't you even ponder that the drafts of most of your statements and communiques have been written by the Monafeq[illegible] and Zionists?

With this unprincipled approach, don't you realize you are not serving peace, but have abandoned the world thirsting for peace to fear and anxiety?

You have always accused the Islamic revolution of violence. If, by doing so, your plan is to make us relinquish our principles, we can tell you very clearly that you are mistaken, in the same dreadful manner that Salman Rushdie was mistaken in London. Britain considers itself the greatest expert on Islam and the Muslims but its analyses was baseless.

It has been proved that we support the human rights of the oppressed Palestinians to the last and condemn their massacre. We will continue to fight tyranny and oppression to the end. You approved Resolutions 242, 338, and 799 according to your own fancies but you do not wish to accept them. You are the flagbearers of lawlessness and disorder, yet you accuse others. You imposed an unwanted war on us using the Iraqi regime and you imposed an arms embargo on us while you armed Saddam to the teeth with the most modern armaments. You called for a cease-fire in numerous resolutions while our territory was still under Iraqi occupation. You strengthened Saddam, which is why he occupied Kuwait. Then you said you made a mistake. You are making another mistake.

To liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, you mobilized 30 countries and, with the force of your technology and sophisticated weaponry, you extricated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and announced that you oppose occupation and occupationists. If you tell the truth, why is it that when the occupation of the territory of Muslims in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria is raised, you support the occupiers? What justification do you have for this horrifying contradiction?

You intend to begin a new round of contemptible Arab-Israel talks. The participating delegations who are ashamed of the futility of previous rounds are under immense public pressure. The Zionists need to create an atmosphere of threats and intimidation so that the participating Arab delegations can attend the talks with some peace of mind. Was this not the objective behind the New York explosion?

If you are so weak, why do you challenge us to a duel? [preceding word in English] Why do you raise an uproar when you lose the duel and start whipping up some sort of atmosphere? We are not warmongers. Our armor is our faith and our ideology is our strongest weapon. You believe that a higher level of thinking caused the decline of the Soviet Union. Then why are you so abject and despicable in the face of Islam? Our war with you is a war of ideologies and your war with us is also a war of two different schools of thought. Our mutual wars are wars of values and the greater values will endure. "Verily, God will defend (from ill) those who believe." [Koranic verse]

Egypt's 'Propaganda' Said Bid for U.S. Sympathy

NC1903151793 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 13 Mar 93 pp 13, 16

[M. Mollazadeh commentary: "Egypt and the New York Explosion"]

[Excerpts] The suspicious blast at the World Trade Center and the arrest of a Jordanian said to be of Palestinian origin have sparked off a wave of propaganda against Islamic factions inside and outside the Arab world. U.S. federal police have not provided any convincing evidence that [Muhammad] Salamah was involved. [passage omitted]

Adding to the significance of the blast is that it is attributed to Islamic groups and that the name of combatant Egyptian clergyman Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman who lives in the United States has also been linked with it, despite his explicitly speaking against such acts, which he considers to harm the Muslim uprising. But the Egyptian Government is trying to convince U.S. officials that the explosion is linked with struggles by Egypt's Islamic faction and that al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [the Islamic Group] and its blind Egyptian leader in New York were involved.

As the first to flagrantly condemn the Islamic Group, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak has shown that he is trying to use the explosion for his own benefit. Apparently, the Egyptian Government hopes to convince U.S. officials that Islamic fundamentalism is not solely a regional threat that stems from the actions of Arab leaders, but is also a serious and ominous threat against U.S. security. The Egyptian Government appears to hope to direct the outcome of FBI investigations against Islamic tendencies, irrespective of whether the investigation reveals the real perpetrators. As long as world propaganda is aimed against the opponents of Husni Mubarak's regime, the mission will be fulfilled. [passage omitted]

So it is understandable why Husni Mubarak was the first—even before the FBI—to think the Islamic faction might be responsible for the blast. It would seem that even if the Islamic faction is found not to have been involved, the Egyptian Government will try to distort the investigation's outcome and continue to insist on its initial stances, because if the problem the Egyptian regime faces is presented within the general context of U.S. problems, it will benefit the Egyptian regime. Based on this principle, you can expect propaganda against the Islamic faction in Egypt to continue after the anti-Islamic propaganda in the United States dies down. There is pretty much agreement on this.

Of course, there is no doubt the New York explosion was the work of an organized and experienced group that enjoyed great security opportunities. A small group cannot have operated on this level. The incident was so significant that President Clinton said the United States is unsafe; this was a disturbing confession by a superpower that considers itself to be the victor in the Cold War. If, as the propaganda aimed against the Islamic faction claims, Islamic groups have infiltrated the United States to this extent, you can say that the duties of the federal police are more difficult than you thought. If an Islamic group can extend its operations from the Middle East to the United States, perhaps this is no small terrorist group as is claimed and perhaps different methods must be applied to control this group. If the United States concludes that the Islamic faction can create insecurity inside the United States and reaches an agreement with this faction, can't the Egyptian government believe that it will be the main victim of U.S. security interests? If there is an Islamic group that uses explosions, what reason can the United States have for not concluding a political transaction with such a group? Husni Mubarak's government knows better than anyone that a change of stance in the United States is affected by national interests and that puppet regimes are supported as long as they guarantee U.S. interests. Once it is clarified that a regime harms U.S. national interests, political transactions with that regime's opponents will be carried out faster than Husni Mubarak can think. There are many such experiences. We need not recount them here.

You can say the Egyptian regime uses a double-edged sword in its propaganda on the New York blast and that it is not clear if, in its confrontation of its rivals and in a miscalculated move, this sword will sever its own artery. It is too soon to judge. [passage omitted]

The New York blast has given the Egyptian Government the opportunity to internationalize its domestic problem in a bid to gain the sympathies of U.S. officials. It is too soon to say whether it will succeed. In the United States, it is very difficult to find convincing reasons to bring Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman to Cairo—as Egypt wishes—to be imprisoned, or to remove him from the scene of struggles. As long as the federal police supervise the case, propaganda can be guided in the direction Egypt wants to guide it. But once the case goes to court, the situation will change and convincing reasons will be needed, especially when the defendant has the right to a lawyer and plans to use this right. It seems that influencing every U.S. justice system employee will not be as easy as influencing security officials. If Egypt has been unable to draw a line between these two, it cannot expect to gain much.

European Parliamentarian Criticizes Resolution

LD1803194093 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Following the issuance of a European Parliament resolution on human rights violations in Iran and Iran's arms procurements, one of the members of that Parliament noted that the issues raised in that resolution are based on unreliable and dubious sources and have been collected and put together with particular political and military presumptions. According to a Central News Unit report from Paris, Vasilis Efraimidhis, a member of the European Parliament, issued a statement objecting to the slogan-like and unclear text of that resolution and pointed out the methods which were used to prepare it. The statement also refers to some of the resolution's contents in which clear and obtainable facts from Iran have been ignored by those who prepared it and says that efforts have been made to project a violent image of Iran to the world.

Petroleum Minister on Phone-In Program

LD1803222393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0900 GMT 18 Mar 93

["In Line With Officials, In Step With the People" phone-in program, with Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i; moderator is unidentified; in the studio—live]

[Excerpts] [Moderator] [passage omitted] Mr. Aqazadeh, I will not begin with a question, but instead let you talk to us about the achievements of the Petroleum Ministry now that we are on the threshold of the new year.

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] Thank you very much. The year 1371 [ending 20 March 1993] was a busy year for the Petroleum Ministry. We invested approximately 160 billion tomans, activated a number of important projects, achieved growth in the country's production capacity—in petrochemical production—and also expanded the gas network. On the whole, we are pleased with the work done and are preparing ourselves for 1372. In view of the change in the foreign exchange rate, the increase in the volume of work in the Petroleum Ministry this year—the foundations of which were laid five years ago, at the start of the five-year plan—which is the last year of the plan, we hope that the record of the Petroleum Ministry at the end of next year will be a positive one for the country and in accordance with the schedule or even ahead of it in some sectors.

Of course, I will give you brief statistics for each field: In the field of oil production, this year we succeeded in [word indistinct] 4.2 million barrels. In the petrochemical field, fortunately this year our production reached 5.5 million tonnes, which in comparison with the beginning of the plan, when it stood at 880,000 tonnes, represents a remarkable growth rate. In the field of gas, the production of 40 million cubic meters at the beginning of the plan, has now reached 85 million cubic meters, while there has also been an average growth rate of 22 percent in gas consumption during the past four years. This represents remarkable growth, in particular in comparison with the plan which forecast 8.4 percent growth.

A number of important projects in the oil industry became operational this year, such as Esfahan's oil production unit, which supplied all the engine oil for the country, putting a complete end to imports. Esfahan's aromatic unit became operational, bringing about 165,000 tonnes of petrochemical products into the production stage. With the completion of a unit at Kangan [gas refinery] and with 45 million cubic meters of production in that unit, which was above its nominal capacity, we have fortunately achieved results. We have activated Karang gas.

Another significant success for the Petroleum Ministry was in the field of drilling where we set a new record in the history of the oil industry. And in total, about 300,000 meters of drilling was conducted by the National Oil Company. With the repair of [word indistinct] and also the Continental Shelf and the 12 masts which we chartered this year, in total we carried out 394,000 meters of drilling this year.

This year again, a number of new reserves were discovered in the Persian Gulf region and on land, which has added to the country's reserves. There were also other projects which in total yielded good results. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Mr Aqazadeh, do you employ foreign nationals in the Petroleum Ministry?

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] Currently there are about 100 medical doctors from Muslim countries and India working for us. The foreign nonmedical cadre might be between 10 and 20 people. But such operations as exploration, drilling, production, refining, gas distribution, and the operation of petrochemical units all over the country are fully carried out by domestic manpower and we are managing this ourselves. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Mr. Aqazadeh, have we assessed which markets are most useful to us in terms of finding markets for the export of our petrochemical products in the future, that is, when we move away from being a single-export country to one where we export petrochemical products? After all, the countries surrounding us are all oil producers and have such installations.

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] First, I should say that our country is one of the major importers of petrochemical products and my assessment is that, for the second plan, we will import approximately $3 billion worth of chemical and petrochemical products. The first priority is to secure the country's domestic needs. Second, we have to prepare the ground for the export of petrochemical products. In answer to your question, I would say that right now we have exported $2.2 billion of petrochemical substances because we are committed to selling, on the futures market, $2.2 billion of petrochemical products in the next five years to customers whose contracts we have just signed. [passage omitted] So, in the second plan, we have secured our domestic needs as well as exported a major part of our petrochemical products. As for the rest, our surplus products—those which we opted to produce such as tires and plastics and the other petrochemical products—we have not, up to now, found it difficult to find markets for them.

[Unidentified telephone questioner] Each year, during the winter season we encounter difficulty in the fuel distribution network. I am not satisfied with past explanations. So what is the excuse this year?

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] I take this opportunity to explain our fuel distribution network. Immediately after the outbreak of the [Iran-Iraq] war, the Abadan oil refinery with its 550,000-barrel capacity was knocked out of service. At the time, the capacity of the Tehran refinery was 200,000 barrels; the Tabriz refinery had a capacity of 65,000 barrels, Shiraz 40,000 barrels, and Bakhtaran 15,000 barrels. We can see that Abadan refinery was the main source of the country's fuel production. The Esfahan refinery became operational later. This is an important refinery in the country. On the other hand, the growth rate of the country's population is high.

During the early days after the revolution we were distributing 60 or 70 million liters of oil by-products, whereas now, the country's needs have increased to 160 to 165 million liters. [passage omitted]

In summary, I would like to say that during the first 11 months of this year, our distribution of oil by-products increased by 3,371,452 [number as heard] liters compared with last year. The increased figure for kerosene alone is 1.876 billion [number as heard] liters. You must bear in mind that we distributed kerosene on the open market. This was our first experiment of distributing kerosene on the open market. Next year, the Arak refinery will become operational and the capacity of the Abadan refinery will increase by about 130,000 barrels. As a result, our import figure will be reduced. The Majles permitted us to import 279,000 barrels, but we reduced this figure to 190,000 barrels. Thanks to the operation of the new units, we hope the situation will improve. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] What about the shortage of gasoline in Tehran? Please, Mr. Aqazadeh.

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] As far as the supply and stock-piling of gasoline are concerned, we have no problem anywhere in the country. Rumors are sometimes circulated and as a result customers suddenly rush to gas stations. A few days ago, when rumors circulated in Tehran that the price of gasoline was to go up to 15 tumans, suddenly everyone who had a vehicle went to a gas station to fill up. But we denied the rumor and supplied Tehran with 3 million liters more gas than on usual days. [passage omitted]

Of course, in Tehran there is a shortage of gas stations because it is not a rewarding business and people do not show an interest in investing in it. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Mr. Aqazadeh, would you please comment on our standing in OPEC. [passage omitted]

[Aqazadeh-Kho'i] As for OPEC, one cannot cover all aspects of the issue in the short space of time left to us on this program. Bearing in mind our production circumstances inside OPEC, our role is an effective one inside OPEC and even on international markets. The viewpoints and policies of Iran and Saudi Arabia are effective in the international oil market—of course all the countries of OPEC are effective—and on the basis of the weight of their production, these two countries play a serious role in world oil price policies. Of course, consumers, with their tools and volumes of reserves in their tanks also play a role and make an impact. Altogether, this year, the price was higher than that envisaged in the 1371 budget plan and fortunately, therefore, we were in a better situation in relation to the budget forecast, from the point of view of price. Next year, with the prices and amount the Majlis has envisaged, we hope that if the political problems of the oil market are solved—especially noting the absence of a clear picture regarding Iraq's position in the future—we hope that with cooperation with other members of the OPEC members, we may be able to control the market and settle for prices that are acceptable in the oil market. [passage omitted]

World Bank Grants $157 Million for Agriculture

LD1703134193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] The World Bank has endorsed the extension of $157 million of new credit facilities to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The credit is to be used for the implementation of irrigation and drainage projects and also for the expansion of over 90,000 hectares of farmland in Zarrineh-Rud, Tajan, Behbahan, and Moqan. According to an IRNA report, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance has announced that the expenditure in rials for the irrigation project has amounted to over 247 billion rials, which has been allocated in the form of a development budget. The implementation of these projects is expected to increase the annual production of agricultural products such as wheat, barley, rice, cotton, beetroot, oil seeds, corn, summer crops, and alfalfa by 358,000 tonnes, and it will benefit 46,000 farming families. The project should be completed within six years.

European Firms Contracted To Build Qeshm Bridge

LD1703222893 Tehran IRNA in English 1806 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] London, March 17, IRNA—A Cypriot-based developing company and a firm of British consultants have been commissioned by Iran to finance, develop, design and build a bridge connecting the Persian Gulf's largest island, Qeshm, to the Iranian mainland.

According to Acer Consultants of Guildford, the bridge from Bandar Abbas will be a 2.5km road and rail link, which is estimated to cost dlrs [dollars] 100 million.

One of four European contractors invited to take part in the project will work with an Iranian contracter in the joint venture. The Middle East Trading Company in the Isle of Man has already been appointed as financial consultants.

The developers, Sante Trading, is currently negotiating with Bank Saderat of Tehran to extend their role as joint financial consultants with Middle East Trading.

Qeshm was set up in Iran's first post-revolution five-year development plan with Kish as free-trade zones. Both islands were selected as gateways to boost trade, but Qeshm project aims are much higher.

Last year, foreign currency expenditures totaling some dlrs 9 billion were projected for ventures on Qeshm Island, which is three times the size of Singapore.

Plans already underway include an airport, inaugurated lower plant complex undertaken with Siemens of Germany, commercial buildings, housing developments and the planting of 250,000 trees.

Projects for a giant dock, the largest in the country, and a 121-km long fresh water pipeline, are also projected among more than 20 other major developments launched.

Extensive gas fields, with reserves estimated at some 1,700 cubic meters, are located off the coast at Qeshm and construction work has started with Japan's Kobe Steel Company for a sponge iron factory with an annual capacity of one million tons.

The development of Qeshm, situated in the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, has ramifications that reach well beyond creating a thriving, internationally competitive industrial, maritime and commercial center.

Its potential is of a modern-day silk route, connecting east and west, for which Acer Consultants say that the bridge is a vital part for its future.

Sante and Acer have already received the letter of intent for the project and the feasibility study is expected to begin this September. It is estimated that the whole project from start to finish will take three years.

Abadan Port Reopens After Reconstruction

LD1203214493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] After a period of 13 years the commercial port of Abadan reopened on Friday [12 March] afternoon in the presence of the road and transportation minister, following the completion of the reconstruction and repair work on four small and large jetties. According to a Central News Unit report, the reopening of Abadan port will from now on enable ships with the draught capacity of three to four meters and tonnage of 2,500 tonnes to dock at that port. The reconstruction and repair work on

Abadan port's buildings and installations had started in Aban [month beginning 23 October] last year, and thus far 15,000 cubic meters of earth has been cleared, 16,000 cubic meters of the coastline around the port has been dredged, and a section of the port's construction work has been completed.

It should be noted that over 1.2 billion rials has thus far been spent on the reconstruction of Abadan port's installation.

Petrochemical Complex To Become Operational in 1993

LD1703133193 Tehran IRNA in English 1309 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Arak, Central Prov., March 17, IRNA—Iran will produce various petrochemical products once the first phase of Arak petrochemical complex becomes operational in the first half of the next Iranian calendar year (to start March 21), managing director of the complex said here Sunday [14 March]. Noting that installation of machineries of the complex began three years ago, he said so far 130,000 tons of machinery have been installed in the complex. So far rls. [rials] 3,500 billion have been spent on the project and its steam unit and power generator are already operational.

Pakistan

Official Condemns Indian Charges Over Bomb Blasts

BK1803154993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan has made it clear that the Indian allegations implicating Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] in the recent bomb blasts in Bombay and Calcutta are baseless, irresponsible, and extremely regrettable. Answering the queries, he said that, before the commencement of investigations by the Indian authorities themselves, allegations had been made implicating Pakistan and ISI. The foreign secretary also said that such allegations were leveled at the time of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi also. The foreign secretary referred to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's message to his Indian counterpart, in which he described the bomb blasts as condemnable. He expressed the hope that the Indian Government will advise all the political elements to exercise restraint in order to prevent unnecessary damage to the atmosphere between the two countries.

Reduction in Tension Urged

BK1903053993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Commentary by Mohammad Yamin: "Need for Reducing Indo-Pakistan Tension"]

[Text] Tragic and regrettable as the recent bombing incidents in the Indian cities of Bombay and Calcutta are, it is a matter of dismay and concern that responsible quarters in India should blame these on Pakistan. In fact, the spate of allegations hurled from the Indian side on Pakistan on every misfortune that India faces or any mishap that occurs there assumes such proportions that one often wonders about the rare remote-controlled capability of Pakistan in such matters. It is true that the Indian Government has not yet officially held Pakistan responsible for the sad incident, but the kind of outbursts and outpourings resorted to by the leaders of the ruling Congress party, the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party, and the Bombay police chief are not only malicious and misleading, they are least helpful to the cause of peace and political climate in the South Asian subcontinent. The fact of the matter is that nobody in Pakistan, including the top leadership, has looked at the devastation and havoc caused in Calcutta and Bombay by the hitherto unidentified terrorists as anything but grave human tragedy and example of heinous activity, as indeed was desecration of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya last year and that of the Golden Temple, the Sikh holy shrine at Amritsar, some years ago. But, it is a pity that the extremist and prejudiced elements in India would always attribute all that befalls India to the machinations of Pakistan.

Is not it high time for all sane persons and men of control to ponder for a while and work for the restoration of some level of normalcy in the relations between India and Pakistan, which have had an uneasy passage thanks mainly to the senseless utterances by militant factions? Is it not time to pay some attention to the [words indistinct] services between the two nations instead of indulging in senseless mutual recriminations over nonissues.

In this context, the reported observations by the Indian high commissioner in Islamabad deserve serious consideration. The Indian envoy has spelled out his government's desire for bilateral talks with Pakistan for a mutual agreement on defense cuts. Nothing could be more welcome from Pakistan's viewpoint. The bulk of the Indian armed forces, which are at least three times larger than those of Pakistan, remain more or less permanently deployed along the Indo-Pakistan borders. The Indian defense expenditure is many times higher than that of Pakistan and India is much stronger in military strength than Pakistan in terms of quantity, firepower, and sophistication. Pakistan is only too conscious of mutually controlling expenditure over the futile arms race in the subcontinent, while the serious problems of its teeming millions in the social and economic sectors, such as health and education, food and shelter, remain sorely neglected.

The Indian high commissioner's informal offer ought to be followed up by a formal reply to Pakistan prime minister's proposal of 6 June last, pleading for disarmament, nonproliferation, and reduction in the armed forces and the quantum of conventional weapons.

Rao Thanks Sharif for Message

BK1903163493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] The Indian prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, has thanked the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, for his message of sympathy on recent bomb blasts in Bombay. In his message, he said the outrage deserves condemnation for the senseless injury it inflicts upon the innocent and the damage it causes to property.

Spokesman Denies Talks With U.S. on Nuclear Program

BK1903032693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has clarified that there has been no talk between Pakistan and the United States on the question of limiting the nuclear program, as alleged by an English daily in Islamabad. He said the report is obviously a distorted view of the recent visit of the chiefs of a Washington organization—the Carnegie Endowment for World Peace—and other intellectual bodies to Pakistan. The spokesman said the talk, during which Pakistan-U.S. relations and the Kashmir dispute were discussed, was not official and was not attended by any representative of the Government of Pakistan or the United States.

DPRK Decision on NPT Withdrawal 'Understandable'

BK1603103793 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 16 Mar 93 p 6

[Editorial: "The Basic Flaw in Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty"]

[Text] It is not difficult to understand North Korea's consternation over the insistence of the United States and the western world in general to subject in nuclear establishments and facilities to international inspection. North Korea insists that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes and with no aggressive intentions towards anyone. The nuclear facilities such as it possesses or plans to develop pose no threat to any state. There is also considerable weight in Pyongyang's contention that international inspection is little short of blackmail. In the first place it compromises an independent country's sovereignty.

Besides, where is the guarantee that on not being able to find anything objectionable at two sites or three, the international inspectors so-called would not demand to probe other sites, facilities and projects. Once permitted to visit one or two projects, the doors would be opened to endless interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state. There can be no valid reason for forcing what is plainly interference on a sovereign state.

The real trouble with the international inspection is that it is blatantly selective. For instance Israel has been given a free rein in the field of development of nuclear weapons of terrific destructive power. The whole world is fully aware that Israel is a full fledged nuclear power. It is also common knowledge that the United States and some of its close allies have actively helped Israel continue to refine its nuclear capability and there is no check on it. The United States continues to extend every possible help to Israel. But no Arab state is permitted to even think of entering the nuclear field. The one which tried has been systematically destroyed and continues to be the target of the fiercest military and diplomatic assults including a blanket United Nations boycott and blockade. India, too, has been given a long leash as far as its proven nuclear capability is concerned. India exploded a nuclear device as long ago as 1974 and has since acquired nuclear weapons. Some western intelligence sources say India could have anything up to 200 nuclear bombs. India has also the capability to deliver these bombs with the help of its Agni missiles. On the other hand Pakistan is under tremendous pressure over its nuclear research programmes which the government has repeatedly declared are entirely peaceful in nature.

The theory is that Pakistan, or for that matter any other country in a situation similar to Pakistan's, should be forced to freeze its nuclear research just where it is. This means that if the freeze formula was to be accepted India would retain its nuclear arsenal as well as its delivery systems while Pakistan will have nothing comparable. How can anyone accept such a manifestly loaded formula against its security and sovereign independence? If justice is to be done then all states should be treated with even- handed dispensation. So far the United States has tended to be arbitrary in its nuclear non-proliferation policies and no self-respecting nation can submit to such policies. North Korea's decision to opt out of the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] charade is understandable particularly when it is known that South Korea has the support of U.S. nuclear forces in the region.

Japanese Trade, Industry Official Visits

BK1503145293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Text] Japanese [Vice] Minister for International Trade and Industry Mr. Hatakeyama held talks with the federal finance minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, in Islamabad today. The talks focused on strengthening economic relations between the two countries. The Japanese minister's visit is a follow-up of prime minister's successful discussions with his counterpart during his visit to Japan. Mr. Sartaj Aziz briefed the Japanese minister about the successful privatization process in the country. He said there is significant potential for foreign investment in areas like power, telecommunications, and automotive. The finance minister expressed the desire for increasing transfer of trade and investment capital from Japan to Pakistan. The Japanese minister appreciated economic reforms, especially foreign investment incentives introduced by the government. He assured that Japan would

continue to support Pakistan's economic program which places emphasis on private sector investment.

Meets Sharif

BK1603144093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The Japanese delegation led by the vice minister for international trade and industry, Mr. Hatakeyama, called on the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, in Islamabad today. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said he is happy to note that Japanese investors and businessmen are desirous of making investment in Pakistan as a result of economic reforms of the government. He said with the restoration of peace in Afghanistan, there is tremendous opportunity for foreign entrepreneurs to invest in Pakistan. Pakistan, he said, is destined to play a positive role and serve as a gateway to Central Asia.

The Japanese minister appreciated the economic reforms program introduced by the government. He also lauded the transport schemes, particularly the introduction of yellow cab scheme.

The meeting was also attended by Federal Finance Minister Mr. Sartaj Aziz and Japanese Ambassador Kunio Muraoka.

Cooperation in Economic Reform Program

BK1703023993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Japan has promised its continued cooperation with the Pakistan Government's economic reforms program and has said the program has greatly encouraged the private sector. The assurance came during a meeting between Hatakeyama, the visiting Japanese vice minister for trade and industry, and Federal Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz in Islamabad yesterday. The Japanese minister also said his country is willing to sign the 28th yen economic assistance agreement to the tune of nearly $356 million.

The finance minister briefed the Japanese minister about the success of the privatization process. He also told the Japanese minister that wide prospects exist for foreign investments in Pakistan in the power, telecommunications, and automobile sectors.

Joint Naval Exercises Held With France

BK1803165493 Hong Kong AFP in English 0738 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Karachi, March 17 (AFP)—Two French destroyers conducted joint exercises with units of the Pakistan Navy in the Arabian Sea, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Department said here Wednesday.

The French ships were here on a week long visit for the manoeuvres to foster coordination between the two Navies.

Anti-aircraft and surface weapons featured prominently during the exercise as well as the use of communications and electronics warfare systems, the ISPR said.

Netherlands To Provide $50-Million Grant

BK1603144893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Netherlands will provide a grant assistance to the tune of $50 million to Pakistan. An agreement to this effect was signed in Islamabad today.

Accord With Turkey on Building Highway Project

BK1803150993 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] The construction work of the Islamabad-Peshawar section of Pakistan motorway has been awarded to Messrs Binder Holding Construction Company of Turkey. The contract is for the second phase of the six-lane limited access motorway M-2. An agreement to this effect was signed between Pakistan and Turkey in Islamabad today. The total cost of the project will be 16.5 billion rupees and the project will be completed within two years. The project will be completed on partial financing basis with 60 percent GOP [Government of Pakistan] funding and 40 percent as loan backed by the Government of Turkey.

Sharif Orders Arrest of Punjab Assembly Member

BK1903145093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Excerpt] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has said the government will not tolerate injustice and the culprits, however influential, will be dealt with according to the law of the land. The prime minister categorically stated that he did not need the support of MNA's [Members of National Assembly] or MPA's [Members of Provincial Assembly] involved in crimes or patronizing criminals. The prime minister was addressing the people in Shekhupura, where a few days ago a six-year-old son of a poor peon was killed in a cross firing between two rival groups. On arrival, the prime minister was accorded a rousing welcome by the people of the area when he reached the residence of the peon to condole the death of his son who thanked him for providing speedy justice to the poor people. Talking to the people, the prime minister said nobody is above law and the culprit, even if he belongs to the ruling party, would be dealt with according to law. The prime minister confirmed from the people and the local authorities whether member of the Punjab assembly, Abdur Rashid Dogar, was involved in the firing incident. When they replied in the affirmative, the prime minister ordered immediate arrest of the MPA. PTV's representative says on the directive of the prime minister, Abdur Rashid

Dogar, MPA was arrested immediately. Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif sympathized with the bereaved family and offered his condolence on the sad demise of the innocent child. [passage omitted]

Sri Lanka

Exchange Control Regulation for Exporters Withdrawn

BK1903113493 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] The finance ministry yesteday withdrew the exchange control regulation which requires exporters to remit the foreign exchange earned from their exports within six months. It applies to exports effected after yesterday. Industries Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe said the decision was in keeping with the government's liberalization policy and would be reviewed, if it hurts the country's foreign reserve position.

Resident Guest Scheme for Foreigners To Be Implemented

BK1903113693 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Text] A resident guest scheme for retired foreigners will be implemented. Foreign investors and eminent foreign professionals who could contribute to the economic development, the enrichment of arts, science and technology are issued five-year resident visas and Sri Lankan travel documents. But, earlier, there was provision for retired foreigners who do not fall in those categories to (?owe) their residence in Sri Lanka. The introduction of this scheme for retired foreign guests [words indistinct] good apart from the direct arrival of financial benefit in the form of foreign exchange remittances also helps to boost several of Sri Lanka's service industries. The cabinet of ministers has given its approval to implement this scheme by considering a proposal made by Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunge. The number of retired foreigners to be registered in any calendar year will be limited to 250. The scheme will be reviewed every three years by the implementing agency. Visas to such foreigners are to be issued three years and renewed at the end of every three years. Purchase of land will not be permitted to them.